TWENTY-NINTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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THE DICKENSIAN

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AND OTHER ARTICLES

ILLUSTRATED

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A NEW DEPARTMENT OF THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP.

DICKENSIAN COSTUMES ON HIRE.

SPECIAL NOTICE

In order to meet the repeated requests of Members of the Fellowship, the Council is gratified to be able to announce that a Costume Department has been established at The Dickens House.

The nucleus of the collection of costumes has been formed during the past year by Miss Minards, the Assistant Secretary, assisted by a willing band of helpers.

There is already available for hire a good assortment of ladies' costumes and also a few for gentlemen (as far as possible correct in detail according to Dickens's works) suitable for dramatic performances, pageants, costume dances and similar functions.

A list of present stock can be had upon application to Miss Minards who has undertaken the direction of the new department.

The stock of costumes is being supplemented and special attention will be given to the men's department at the earliest opportunity.

To Members the present rates for hire are as follows :—

Each Costume	... ...	3/6 per day, 5/- two days.
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plus carriage

Special rates will be quoted to non-members upon application ; also for Bazaars, Pageants, etc.

Miss Minards will be pleased to receive :—

1. Gifts of Dickensian Costumes no longer required.
2. Oddments of material, ribbons, laces, etc.
3. " Period " clothing.
4. Unwanted Chests of Drawers for storage purposes. (A post card intimation should be sent).

WANTED FOR DRAMATIC WORK IN LONDON

Two more gentlemen are required. Please apply to Miss Jolly at The Dickens House.

Miss Jolly has in preparation a very interesting series of playlets for the London meeting on April 26th ; there will be three scenes depicting " Lillyvick's Romance," and ditto of that concerning Augustus Moddle in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, " the whole to conclude with," as the old bills used to say, " At the Blue Dragon."

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SPRING
VOL. XXIX. 1933 No. 226

Drawn by [*Ruth Whittaker*

Christmas at Lant Street. There was little repose about Lant Street in the Borough during the three days in December on which the Dickens Fellowship gave their usual "treats" to the three departments of the Charles Dickens School there. The arrangements, in the hands of a band of workers under the direction of Mrs. A. W. Edwards, were excellent, and the youngsters enjoyed every minute of the long anticipated event.

In the Boys' and Girls' Departments the entertainment provided by the scholars included some very well executed playlets from Dickens. The school is in one of the most necessitous districts in London, and we were pleased to notice the remarkable well-being of the children, and the good feeling which existed between them and their masters and mistresses. To such a high level has the care of children been raised that we could not help wishing that Dickens, after a lapse of a century, could revist the scenes with which he was once so familiar.

We particularly wish to congratulate Miss Johnson, the Head Mistress of the Girls' Department. She has not long taken up her duties, but has lost no time in instilling a love of Dickens into her girls. Every child learns the following:

> "Charles Dickens was a great writer of stories. He began life as a poor boy, and when he came to write his books he described poor children so sympathetically that people tried to make life happier for them.
>
> Charles Dickens once lived in Lant Street, and we are proud to think that our school is named after so great a man."

We tested one youngster at random, and were delighted at the immediate response. Mr. Lord, the Head Master, also a newcomer, and

a keen student of Dickens and all he stood for, will, we are sure, not let the Girls' Department get one ahead of his !

* * * * *

Mrs. B. W. Matz.

It is with great regret that we have to record the death on the 26th December of the widow of the late Editor of this magazine, in her sixty-fifth year. Mrs. Matz, although not a member of any executive committee of the Fellowship, was actively associated with it from its very commencement, and her kindly presence will be sorely missed, for she had a charm which greatly endeared her to a host of friends. We were delighted to see her at the Rochester Conference last May after a short absence from those functions, and it is a pleasure now to recall that she carried the special wreath and headed the procession to the Abbey on June the ninth. The Council of the Fellowship was well represented at the grave-side, where representative members of the Balham Branch (of which she was also a member) also attended, and a large number of wreaths from individual members of the Fellowship. Among the floral tributes was one from The Dickens Fellowship testifying to the love and respect in which dear Alice Matz was held by all.

* * * * *

Dickens's Memorandum Book.

Once again the London members had the pleasure of a talk from Mr. A. S. Comyns Carr on what appears to be the almost inexhaustible topic of the note book which Dickens kept for some five or six years. Although Forster devotes a chapter to this interesting item, Mr. Carr found it contained much more matter than Forster has left on record. The book was presented to his parents forty years ago (it bears the inscription : " To Mr. and Mrs. Comyns Carr, with affectionate love of Kate Perugini, 1892 "), and was sold in 1918 for the benefit of the British Red Cross. At that time it fetched a modest £325. Eleven years later, after passing through various hands, it was sold at public auction in America for no less than $15,000.

We gave an account of this book in our volume for 1920, with a facsimile of one page ; a facsimile of another page is reproduced opposite.

* * * * *

A Real Dickens Play.

It was a very interesting experience to witness a performance of a real Dickens play, and the St. Pancras Branch is heartily to be congratulated on being the first branch of the Fellowship (so far as we are aware) to put on *The Strange Gentleman,* and apart from the " asides " which spoil all plays of that period, it is not at all a bad play, although Dickens had a poor opinion of it and the other dramatic pieces which he wrote before *Pickwick* had secured him a permanent place as a story writer. Mr. W. J. Reed was quite effective in the title-rôle, as the old criticisms used to have it, and the company, under the direction of Miss Marjorie Davies, who was responsible for the excellent staging, is fortunate in having Mr. Albert Regan, who played the gallant lover, Charles, with

The office-boy for ever looking out of window, who never has anything to do. Does in Our Mutual.

The Lady, in fine passion, who is determined to be interesting. No matter how much I love that person — nay, the more so for that very reason — I must flatter and bother, and be weak and apprehensive and nervous and what not. If there will and strong, agreeable and resplendent, my friend might hysterics.

How as to a story with two periods — with a lapse of time between, like a French Drama?

Titles for such a notion. Time!

The Leaves of the Forest
Scattered Leaves
The Great Wheel
Round and Round
Old Leaves.
Old and New Leaves.
~~Leaves of Grass~~
~~Leaves~~
Long ago
Far apart
~~Rambling Round~~

Five and Twenty Years
Years and Years.
Rolling Years.
Day after Day.
~~Many Carlons~~
Rolling Stones.
~~Dried Leaves~~
Fallen Leaves.
Two Generations.
~~Many Years Leaves~~

Felled Trees.

A Page of Dickens's Memorandum Book

a gusto hardly expected from one who only a short time before had given the audience a well-studied Pecksniff. Mr. A. W. Wickens was pompous and impressive as the Mayor, and although the remainder of the cast are not individually mentioned, it is no reflection on their abilities.

* * * * *

Count de Suzannet. We are pleased to present to our readers a photograph of Count de Suzannet, through whose kindness *The Dickensian* is much indebted for the reproduction of many very early letters of Dickens, throwing much light on this obscure part of the author's life. Count Suzannet possesses what is probably the finest Dickens library in the world, especially rich in important letters, manuscripts and presentation copies. His interest in Dickens, however, does not end in collecting, for the Count has a genuine appreciation of the author and an extensive knowledge of his life. Nobody is better qualified to give an opinion of Mr. Eckel's revised edition of his well-known bibliography, and his review of that book will be found on page 117.

* * * * *

Is it a Dickens Inn? A writer on "Famous Inns of the West" in the "Evening World" (Bristol) devotes No. 13 to the "Hare and Hounds" Inn at Pickwick, and says that Dickens stayed there when a reporter for "The Morning Chronicle," and that one of the bedrooms is still known as the Dickens Room. We know that Dickens got the name of Pickwick from the family which had taken its name from this village, but the personal association of Dickens with the inn there is news to us, and should not be accepted unless substantial support is given to the claim. Dickens was quite an unknown man when he was a reporter, and it would be quite impossible for him to have been recognised and visitors' books were very few and far between in country inns.

* * * * *

Fire at Cob Tree Hall. Christmas Day at Dingley Dell, 1932, will be associated with a serious fire at its generally accepted prototype near Maidstone, which destroyed the centre part of the ancient manor house, probably the very room from which Mr. Pickwick looked out and "cross-examined solitude after the most approved precedents, at considerable length." It is good news that the rather considerable damage will be promptly and efficiently repaired, for Cob

Tree has become so definitely associated with *The Pickwick Papers* that until we have evidence of a most definite character that it was not really Mr. Wardle's Manor Farm, we shall continue to regard it as such.

* * * * *

A Christmas Carol was again read by the Head Master to the choristers of the York Minster Choir School before " breaking up " for the Christmas holidays. This year marked the thirtieth successive year of this event. We congratulate Mr. Scaife on the achievement.

* * * * *

Help the Dickens House. Some members of the Nottingham Branch have shown the true spirit of fellowship by following up my suggestion of helping The Dickens House. The Misses May and Ida Martin, and Mr. and Mrs. Guest, arranged small Whist Drives at their own houses ; most jolly evenings were spent in this way, and four guineas have been handed over as the result. It is not too late for other branches to arrange similar informal gatherings before the season is over, and at all events I hope that each branch will arrange for their next season's programme to include one item to benefit the funds of their Dickens House.

* * * * *

Master Humphrey's Shop. The shop of Master Humphrey in Barnard Castle, of which a full account was given by Mr. T. P. Cooper in *The Dickensian* for 1931, page 91, has followed the way of the Old Curiosity Shop itself, and has fallen a victim to modern improvements.

* * * * *

Mr. E. V. Lucas's Eulogy. I have to thank the many papers which have copied Mr. E. V. Lucas's eulogy of *The Dickensian* reprinted in the last number from " The Sunday Times." Especially do I thank E.N.C., the writer on " Literary Topics " in the " Hartford Courant." " In this revealing tribute," he writes, " Mr. Lucas shows us *The Dickensian* from a new angle and emphasises a point not, perhaps, fully appreciated even by devout Dickensians. . . . Truly this is a stupendous and a literally unique monument." Yet there are some members of the Dickens Fellowship who are not subscribers to this magazine. Four shillings (or less than 75 cents. U.S. currency) brings it to you post free for a year.

* * * * *

Honour for Mr. J. W. T. Ley. Mr. J. W. T. Ley has been elected Chairman of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Branch of the National Union of Journalists. He previously held the position eighteen years ago, and his election for the second time is a special compliment in connection with the holding of the Annual Delegate Meeting of the Union at Newport next Easter. Mr. Ley is acting as local organiser of this conference. I am sure all readers of *The Dickensian* will join with me in heartily congratulating Mr. Ley on the honours bestowed upon him by his fellow journalists.

WALTER DEXTER.

MORE SAYINGS OF SAIREY

"Spanish Flies is the only thing to draw this nonsense out of you; and if anybody wanted to do you a kindness, they'd clap a blister of 'em on your head, and put a mustard poultige on your back."

* * * * *

"A pleasant evenin', though warm, which, bless you, we must expect when cowcumbers is three for twopence."

* * * * *

"Drat the old creetur, he's a layin' down the law tolerable confident, too! A deal he knows of sons! or darters either! Suppose you was to favour us with some remarks on twins, sir, *would* you be so good!"

* * * * *

"It's a pity that you don't know wot you say, for you'd tire your own patience out if you did, and fret yourself into a happy releage for all as knows you."

* * * * *

"Oh, bother the old wictim, I ain't no patience with him. You give him his own way too much by half. A worritin' wexagious creetur!"

* * * * *

"But I will say, and I would if I was led a Martha to the Stakes for it."

* * * * *

"No blessed creetur as ever I was with in trying times, and they're a many in their numbers, ever brought it as a charge again myself that I was anythin' but mild and equal in my spirits."

* * * * *

"Never mind a contradicting of me, if you seems to feel it does you good, ma'am, I often says, for well you know that Sairey may be trusted not to give it back again."

* * * * *

"I am but a poor woman, but I've been sought arter, sir, though you may not think it. I've been knocked up at all hours of the night, and warned out by a many landlords, in consequence of being mistook for Fire. I goes out working for my bread, 'tis true, but I maintains my independency, with your kind leave, and which I will till death."

* * * * *

"I has my feelins as a woman, and I have been a mother likeways; but touch a pipkin as belongs to me, or make the least remarks on what I eats or drinks, and though you was the favouritest young, for'ard, hussy of a servant gal as ever come into a house, either you leaves the place, or me.

* * * * *

"My earnings is not great, but I will not be impoged upon. Bless the babe, and save the mother, is my mortar, sir; but I makes so free as add to that, Don't try no impogician with the Nuss, for she will not abear it!"

* * * * *

"More changes too, to come, afore we've done with changes. Young ladies with such faces thinks of something else besides berryins, don't they."

DICKENS AS A REPORTER

FURTHER FACTS NOW REVEALED IN NEW LETTERS

WHEN Dickens, speaking at the Dinner of the Newspaper Press Fund in 1865, said that he had gone into the Press Gallery of the old House of Commons when he was "a boy not eighteen," he was exaggerating his youthfulness for such employment. Forster, for some unknown reason, states at the beginning of Chapter Four of his "Life of Charles Dickens," "Dickens was nineteen years old when he at last entered the gallery," and Mr. J. W. T. Ley has rightly pointed out in his indispensable annotated edition published in 1928, that this is inaccurate, as "The True Sun" to which, as Forster goes on to say, "his first parliamentary service was given," did not make its appearance until 5th March, 1832, when Dickens was a month over twenty.

Although in the printed report of the speech, and also in "Speeches, Literary and Social, by Dickens" (Camden Hotten, 1869), Dickens is credited with having said "a boy of not eighteen," Forster omitted the words "of not eighteen" presumably so as not to contradict his earlier statement as to the age being nineteen.

It was nearly five years later that Forster first became acquainted with Dickens, so naturally he had to rely on sources other than his own for details of Dickens's apprenticeship to literature, and several important facts in connection with these days have lately come to light which necessitate alterations in this chapter of the "Life." A letter to Thomas Beard published last year in "Dickens to his oldest Friend," makes it clear that the strike of reporters was not on the staff of "The True Sun," as Forster says it was, but on "The Morning Chronicle," and that this incident took place in February, 1836.

A letter written by Dickens to Lord Stanley in February, 1836, sold recently at Sothebys settles a matter of dispute raised by Forster in this same chapter, and as Forster is the authority whom we are apt to regard as final in all such cases, let us first give the reference to the matter in Forster's own words:—

> "Another anecdote of these reporting days, with its sequel, may be added from his own alleged relation, in which, however, mistakes occur that it seems strange he should have made. The story, as told, is that the late Lord Derby, when Mr. Stanley, had on some important occasion made a speech which all the reporters found it necessary greatly to abridge; that its essential points had nevertheless been so well given in the "Chronicle," that Mr. Stanley, having need of it for himself in greater detail, had sent a request to the reporter to meet him in Carlton House Terrace and take down the entire speech; that Dickens attended and did the work accordingly, much to Mr. Stanley's satisfaction; and that, on his dining with Mr. Gladstone in recent years, and finding the aspect of the dining room strangely familiar, he discovered afterwards, on enquiry, that it was there he had taken the speech. The story, as it actually occurred, is connected with the brief life

of " The Mirror of Parliament." It was not at any special desire of Mr. Stanley's, but for that new record of debates, which had been started by one of the uncles of Dickens and professed to excel Hansard in giving verbatim reports, that the famous speech against O'Connell was taken as described. The young reporter went to the room in Carlton Terrace because the work of his Uncle Barrow's publication required to be done there ; and, if, in later years, the great author was in the same room as the guest of the Prime Minister, it must have been but a month or two before he died, when for the first time he visited and breakfasted with Mr. Gladstone."

The " anecdote " to which Forster refers was no doubt that which had appeared in an article in " The Observer " a few days after Dickens's death, and repeated in Taverner's " Life of Dickens " published by Camden Hotten the same year, but one mistake of the narrator was that he connected the incident with " The Morning Chronicle " instead of with " The Mirror of Parliament." A similar story was told by J. T. Fields in " The Atlantic Monthly " for August, 1870, but as Fields based his recollection of what Dickens had told him, on the diary kept by Mrs. Fields, it may be interesting to examine the extracts from the diary printed in " Harper's Magazine " for June, 1922.

Under date, April 10th, 1868, Mrs. Fields writes in her diary, after recounting what Dickens had told her of some of his coaching adventures during his employment as a reporter :—

" At this period there was a large sheet started in which all the speeches of Parliament were reported verbatim in order to preserve them for future reference—a monstrous plan which fell through after a time. For this paper it was especially desired to have a speech of Mr. Stanley accurately reported upon the condition of Ireland, containing suggestions for the amelioration of the people's suffering. It was a very long and eloquent speech and took many hours in the delivery. There were eight reporters upon the work, each to work three-quarters of an hour and then to retire to write out his portion and be succeeded by the next. It happened that the roll of reporters was exhausted before the speech came to an end, and C.D. was called in to report the last portions, which were very eloquent. This was on Friday, and on Saturday the whole was given to the press and the young reporter ran down to the country for a Sunday's rest. Sunday morning had scarcely dawned when my poor father, who was a man of immense energy, surprised me by making his appearance. The speech had come into Mr. Stanley's hands, who was most anxious to have it correctly given in order to have it largely circulated in Ireland, and he found it all bosh, hardly a word right, except at the beginning and the end. Sending immediately to the office, he had obtained my sheets, at the top of which, according to custom, the name of the reporter was written, and, finding the name of Dickens, had immediately sent in search of me. My father, thinking this would be the making of me, came immediately, and I followed him back to London. I remember perfectly the look of the room and of the two gentlemen in it as I entered—Mr. Stanley and his father. They were extremely courteous, but I could see their evident surprise at the appearance of so young a man. For a moment as we talked I had taken a seat

extended to me in the middle of the room. Mr. Stanley told me he wished to go over the whole speech, and if I was ready he would begin. Where would I like to sit ? I told him I was very well where I was and would begin immediately. He tried to induce me to sit elsewhere or more comfortably, but at that time in the House of Commons there was nothing but one's knees to write upon and I had formed the habit of it. Without further pause then he began, and went on hour after hour to the end, often becoming very much excited, bringing down his hand with violence upon the desk near which he stood and rising at the end into great eloquence."

" In these later years we never met without that scene returning vividly to my mind, as I have no doubt it does to his also, but I, of course, have never referred to it, leaving him to do so if he shall ever think fit."

The story about the recognition of the room when dining in later years in Carlton House Terrace with Mr. Gladstone did not originate in America, but first appeared in the article in " The Observer " to which we have already drawn attention, and we see no reason to doubt it.

The only addition Mr. Fields made to the narrative contained in his wife's diary, was that Dickens, as the first man in the relay of eight, had taken down the first part of the speech as well as the last.

In the letter to Hartland written on 9th December, 1832, and published for the first time in *The Dickensian*, 1932, page 13, it was seen that Dickens was then on the staff of " The Mirror of Parliament," which he had joined at the commencement of the session which opened on the 7th August, 1832 ; this is in accord with the facts stated to Charles Kent by Thomas Beard, and recorded by the former in an article in " Time " for July, 1881.

Lord Stanley's speech was delivered in the early part of the next session, which commenced 29th January, 1833, and for all we know this Hartland may have been one of the inferior reporters who were not able to cope with their work.

On June 6th of the same year, Dickens wrote the following letter to Richard Earle, private secretary to Mr. Stanley.

18 Bentinck Street,
Cavendish Square,
Thursday, June 6th [1833]

Sir,

I trust you will pardon the very great liberty I take in troubling you with any application on my own behalf, but as you have been kind enough to express an opinion in favour of my abilities as a reporter, and as you have had opportunities of perusing my Reports, and being enabled to judge of their accuracy, &c., I am induced to make a request of a strictly private nature—and I can only plead my reliance on your kindness, and a natural wish on my part to enlarge the field of my exertions as an excuse of making it.

I am always entirely unemployed during the recess. I need hardly say that I have many strong inducements for wishing to be so as little as possible, and thinking that perhaps in the course of the business with which you are connected, you are frequently to a certain extent engaged in the formation of commissions or other

Public Boards on which the services of a Short Hand Writer are required, I have made up my mind to take the liberty of asking you, should you ever have an opportunity of recommendation if you would object to mentioning my name—Of course the value of a recommendation from such a quarter would be incalculable, and I trust the recommendation itself would not be misplaced.

I will not detain you further than by again apologising for writing to you, and venturing to express a hope that you will not consider my application impertinent, and consequently unworthy of notice.

I am Sir

Richard Earle Esqre. Your most obliged servant
&c. &c. &c. Charles Dickens.

The letter is crossed with a precis of the reply, " Not likely to have opportunity, but shd one occur, shd not hesitate to recommend."

It is the next letter, written to Lord Stanley himself, that gives us the authority to correct the statement of Forster, to which reference has already been made. It is written on the publication of Dickens's first book, and we can well imagine the pleasure with which he made the presentation. We wonder, too, if he had proudly inscribed his name on the title page of the first volume, as he had done to his friend Beard (see reproduction on page 91 *The Dickensian*, 1932), and doubtless to others, and if so where these volumes are to-day?

15 Furnivals Inn
Monday February 8th, 1836.

My Lord,

When I was connected with The Mirror of Parliament in the capacity of a reporter, I had the honour to wait on your Lordship, for the purpose of taking a faithful report of portion of your Lordship's Speech on moving the second reading of the Irish Disturbances Bill, from your own mouth. Your Lordship having been pleased to express so high an opinion of the report of that part of your speech which had originally fallen into my hands, as to select me for the task.

I trust your Lordship will forgive my recalling so unimportant a circumstance to your recollections, when I advert to it, merely as an apology for the liberty I take, in entreating your Lordship's acceptance of the accompanying Volumes —the first I ever published. If there be anything singular or presumptuous in this request My Lord there is so little singularity in my being an enthusiastic, though humble admirer, of your distinguished character, that I feel almost confident in the strength of my excuse. The wish of Authors to place their works in the hands of those, the eminence of whose public stations is only to be exceeded by the lustre of their individual talents is, and always has been, so generally felt, even by the greatest men who have ever adorned the literature of this country, that I hope it may be pardoned when it displays itself in so young, and so humble a candidate for public favour as

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient,
Humble servant
Charles Dickens.

The foot of page one of this letter is subscribed:

The Right Honble.
Lord Stanley.

Dickens

June 6. 1843

Manchester

misplaced

I will not detain
you further than by
again apologising for
writing to you, and
venturing to express a
hope that you will
not consider my application
impertinent, and consequently
unworthy of notice,

I am Sir

Your most obliged Servant

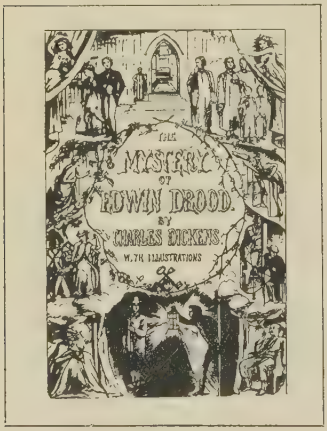
Chas Dickens

Richard Earle Esqre
&c &c &c

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD

A Plea for a Solution which would make Dickens something more than a Writer of Inferior Melodrama.

By S. J. RUST



IT is but natural that, in leaving *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* incomplete, Dickens left a number of other minor mysteries to be solved. His followers seem to regard the mystery of Datchery the most important of these. Datchery is to them, Bazzard, Tartar, Helena Landless, Grewgious, and Edwin Drood himself. I am fully aware that he is not all at once, but good Dickensians support each of them so I dare not omit one from the list. One of these five—whichever you will—has adopted a disguise and style of walk and talk entirely foreign to his, or her, usual style, and squatted down in front of Jasper's door. The reason appears to be a suspicion that Jasper is a cunning criminal, who, although he would be most suspicious of any stranger, would never pierce this disguise, even though Datchery were somewhat absent-minded. I should have thought the strain of guarding against a lapse into the natural voice would be rather great, and cannot see the need for either Bazzard or Tartar to undergo this strain, since under their own names and characters they were probably unknown to Jasper.

We are assured, however, that Dickens could not have introduced a new character so late in a book. It is contrary to good construction of a novel. I doubt whether Dickens was aware of this canon of construction; but I am sure that he would have broken it. He had already done so when he brought the "Younger Brother" into *The Old Curiosity Shop*, and Inspector Bucket into *Bleak House*.

I almost feel that I am not playing the game according to the rules when I look elsewhere for Datchery; but a second minor mystery leads me astray. This is the mystery of Jasper's trusteeship. Jasper was Edwin's guardian and trustee, though there were but half a dozen years or so between their ages. Thus, when Jasper became twenty-one, Edwin was already fully fourteen. Yet the betrothal of Edwin to Rosa, indeed the whole atmosphere of the book, suggests that their parents died when they were quite young. Now Edwin was looking forward to joining in Egypt the firm of which his father had been a partner, and upon which he was a charge. Someone had been managing that firm; and this man was probably the real guardian. I can appreciate his position. It is most important that he should remain in Egypt. While Edwin was at school he could send his pocket-money

through the schoolmaster; but when the lad entered the London works as an apprentice, it would be wiser that someone outside should receive the regular allowance, check the expenditure, and report on Edwin's general behaviour. It is probable that the partner met Jasper, was struck with his reserved manner, persuaded him to undertake this portion of the guardian's duty, and explained to Edwin that henceforward Jasper is his guardian. Grewgious, interested in Edwin only so far as Rosa is affected, made no enquiry into the standing of the guardianship.

Let us return to the true guardian. The favourable reports concerning his old partner's son convince him that soon, when he has fully initiated Edwin into the practical side of the work, he may retire to a peaceful life in England. Only the desire to put Edwin on the road prevents his retiring now. This is the position when a letter arrives from Jasper that Edwin has disappeared. This letter, written under great mental strain, is so strangely worded as to rouse suspicion. He determines to come to England to investigate. There must be some delay. It is necessary to settle certain business affairs, and it is wiser to await further news by the next mail. If he is to investigate it were better that it should be thought that he was still in Egypt. Jasper has seen him but once. He then wore a beard; but many men in England of middle age were clean shaven. A clean shave is a good disguise. His hair was black six years ago; now it was white. Like many men in the East he had kept it short, why not let it grow—six months' growth will provide a disguise. An assumed name and the general usage of the style of address common in Eastern countries completes the disguise.

Such a Datchery would have knowledge of the case which was denied to the other characters of the book. This may explain the next mystery—that of the long chalk mark. I cannot believe that Dickens intended us seriously to believe that Datchery felt that he had scored triumphantly because the Opium Woman shook her fists at Jasper, and declared that she knew him. Who would accept the testimony of such a witness? It seems more probable that Datchery's triumph lay in the recognition of the Opium Woman herself. Notice how keenly interested he is in getting her exact address. This can be understood if she has already played a part of which he has knowledge.

The mystery of the woman is most important in the solution of the great mystery. She appears in the first chapter, and when we consider the apparent irrelevance, but ultimate importance, of Dickens's first chapters—such as the body in the river of *Our Mutual Friend*, Pip's convict, and the irrepressible prisoner of *Little Dorrit*—we see the importance of her early appearance. Very poor, she yet on two occasions spends the return fare to Cloisterham to discover more about Jasper. She shakes both fists at him. Was this merely because, when under the influence of a drug, he threatened "Ned"? I cannot credit her with such altruism. She hated him for some injury of older standing, and sought his name to make certain that he was the object of her hate.

It must be a matter of conjecture to guess the cause of her hate. There is a class of people who hate most those whom they have injured, and are particularly bitter against children who have been associated with their misfortunes. The bitterness of Monks against Oliver Twist is an example of this obsession. I feel that the Opium Woman's animosity against Jasper was of this nature. She may have suffered through him many years previously, probably when he was an infant.

I connect this with a further mystery—that of Jasper's addiction to opium. Although we know that drug takers were more common in the early Victorian period than subsequently, Jasper appears a most unlikely character to become a regular drug taker. May it not have been that a nursemaid had perhaps through ignorance drugged him when he was a child ? The East has been the setting of many of the episodes leading up to this mystery, and I venture to depict a possible additional scene of which Datchery will give the details. A missionary, ill-fitted to stand the tropical climate, lies dying. His daughter has just married a young engineer named Drood, and his wife is so busy looking after him that she has little time to watch the young English nursemaid who has charge of their infant boy. The baby is particularly restless under the influence of heat, insects, and teeth, and some Oriental with whom the girl has gained acquaintance gives her a sleeping draught. Ere this is discovered the baby is being regularly drugged. Then the maid is sent home in disgrace. Her subsequent career is easily pictured. Rejected by her sanctimonious parents, welcomed only by the harpies of Ratcliffe Highway, she becomes a harpy herself, starts to drown her sorrow in drink; for sixteen years is heavens-hard drunk; for a further nine years lives mainly on opium, and at the age of forty-five is ugly, withered, and more senile than many a woman of ninety. Dickens would have excelled in picturing this downfall of one who might, but for the harshness of Victorian " Christianity," have lived a happy useful life.

Now I come to the great Mystery—the incommunicable idea, " very strong, but difficult to work." The drugged baby survives his immediate relatives, and grows up ignorant of this story of his infancy. Would the craving have been absolutely cured ? I doubt whether modern scientists would give a unanimous answer to that question; but we have to consider the answer of Dickens, who lacked scientific training, but had considerable common sense, and would certainly consult the best existing authorities on the subject. I feel that Dickens's answer would be that the craving might return, and the fact that John Jasper the man is a drug-taker is a natural sequel to the fact that John Jasper the babe was given drugs. What would be the influence of the drugs on one of Jasper's temperament—musical and introspective ? There is evidence that Dickens had recently read Wilkie Collins's " The Moonstone." He would probably accept the theory that Jasper sane would know little of the actions of Jasper drugged. Yet there appears a probability that he had a foggy notion that someone is threatening Ned. For this brings me to another minor mystery—the diary. It savours too much of the modern thriller

to suggest that a criminal makes false entries in a diary in order to clear himself if he should be accused. I believe these were genuine entries made by Jasper after the drug-inspired dreams had left a hazy idea of Ned's danger. To whom could he confide such premonitions ? Any healthy-minded man would have laughed at them. Yet Jasper thought they were supernatural warnings. He made " unaccountable expeditions " in the hope that some scene might recall his dreams more vividly. Thinking that Neville Landless might be the potential murderer, he hocussed his wine that he might observe him under circumstances favourable to detection.

How very strong and how difficult to work would have been this task if it is the one that Dickens set himself ! Jasper, a loving and lovable man naturally, acts like a beast when under the influence of drugs ; but finally wins our pity as, lying in the condemned cell, he tells the story of the crime as though he were but a witness of it. To convince a Victorian reading public that drugs may so far divorce the true soul from the body that a demon may enter and use that body for crime would be almost super-human. Yet it is but a slight advance on Wilkie Collins—an advance of Dickens's poetic nature over Collins's prose. It does not demand imagination of a repulsive physical change such as Stevenson's " Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde " called for sixteen years later.

I believe that some such " strong " and " difficult to work " problem was being tackled by Dickens when his bodily strength failed him, and cannot conceive that he was going to give us the weak " thriller " with which many have credited him.

PEEPS AT DICKENS

Pen Pictures from Contemporary Sources

XXIV.—A Second Visit to Gad's Hill

THE following letter from Francis D. Finlay, written in blue ink, on " Gad's Hill Place " notepaper, is prefaced with the following memorandum in Finlay's hand :—

A letter sent to a friend of mine, being a memo. of a visit to Gad's Hill in June 1862 (*Monday June* 9 *till Thursday June* 12).

The letter is included in the album which F. D. Finlay, for many years proprietor and editor of the " Northern Whig," presented to his wife, Janet, on the seventh anniversary of her marriage (April 7th, 1872). Mrs. Finlay was the daughter of Alexander Russel, editor of the " Scotsman." The album contains 19 letters written to Finlay by Charles Dickens ; also a letter of Dickens to Georgina Hogarth, and several other documents of Dickensian interest.—A.S.

2nd visit to Charles Dickens. June, 1862.

Gad's Hill Place,
Higham by Rochester, Kent.

Monday.

Left London-bridge station at 2.30 on Monday June 9, and at Higham station was met by Charles Dickens with his Irish car. Drove me over to Gad's Hill Place, where was most kindly received by Mary Dickens, Georgina Hogarth, and Mrs. Charles Collins (formerly Kate Dickens). Introduced to Charles Collins. Played several games of billiard bagatelle with C.D. and afterwards with C.C. Dinner at 6. Took in M.D. Everything very nice. Very pleasant talk. Played whist in the evening, and had a lot of chat before going to bed at 11.30. A Whitsuntide rural festivity going on all day at the Falstaff Arms tavern, with much band and much beer.

Tuesday.

After breakfast walked about the grounds, chatted, wrote letters, and in the afternoon drove in to Gravesend with C.D. to meet Mr. Thos. A. Trollope, the author of Filippo Strozzi and other works (son of Mrs. Trollope the novelist), who lives in Italy and has been there 20 years. He is a very odd looking, but most agreeable man, very clever and forcible. Came home with him to lunch, and then we all went to play croquet on the lawn, in which we were busily engaged, with great spirit, when Mr. Fechter arrived. The game went on till dinner when Captain Goff came up from Chatham and Frank Dickens from London. Dinner exceedingly elegant, and a profusion of good talk, Fechter being admirable. After dinner croquet again until it was too dark to see any more, and then we all came in and played a most lively game of vingt-et-un until bed-time.

Wednesday.

After breakfast we had croquet as usual, performed by the whole party. Mr. Trollope went away at 11, we had lunch at 1, and then Mr. Fechter went back to London, escorting Miss Dickens who was going up to the Lord Mayor's for a soiree there this evening, and to stay all night there. After they left, C.D., C.C., Miss Hogarth and I went out for a stroll, got caught in a tremendous shower, and were drenched. Came home, changed and dined (elegantly as usual) and after dinner we had some " bounding ball " practice on the lawn, by C.D., Frank D., C.C. and myself, very good exercise indeed. Chat in the evening and whist, C.D. and I partners against Miss Hogarth and C.C. In the evening had a very long and most agreeable talk with Miss Hogarth, C.D.'s sister-in-law, who is a really delightful person, plain, unassuming, totally unaffected and of singularly pleasant and easy manner. After whist, a long chat, telling stories, riddles and conundrums and to bed at 11. All to break up in different directions in the morning.

Thursday.

The whole pleasant party broke up. Mr. and Mrs. Collins went home to Hyde Park Gate. Miss Hogarth and Mr. C.D. to Wellington Street, and I back to Sloane Street. And so ended perhaps the pleasantest visit I ever made, or may ever make.

F. D. Finlay.

1862. June 9 to 12.

DICKENS THE REBEL

By MARY L. PENDERED

I.

"I AM a reformer, heart and soul. I have nothing to gain, everything to lose (for public quiet is my bread), but I am in desperate earnest because I know it is a desperate case."

Thus wrote Dickens to the Baroness Burdett-Coutts in 1854. In *Household Words* for 7th October in that year an article by him addressed to working men had appeared, a warning against the dangers of slums and overcrowding, which, even to this day, remain a menace to the nation's health and a disgrace to our civilisation. Dickens admonished his readers that, unless citizens set themselves in earnest to improve the dwellings of the poor, they would be guilty before God of wholesale murder. He made a strong appeal to the workers themselves, advising them to unite and demand a reform which so closely concerned themselves and their families.

The Baroness wrote to him saying that she was "in a maze" about this article, and asking for an explanation of it. He replied as follows:

"It means that they will never save their children from the dreadful and unnatural mortality prevalent among them (almost too murderous to be thought of), or save themselves from untimely sickness and death, until they have cheap, pure water in unlimited quantity, wholesome air, constraint upon little landlords to keep their property decent under the heaviest penalties, efficient drainage and such alteration in Building Acts as shall preserve open spaces in the closest regions and make them where they are not now. That a worthless Government, which is afraid of every little interest and trembles before the vote of every dust contractor, will never do these things for them, or pay the least attention to them, until they are made election questions and the working people unite to express their determination to have them, or to keep out of Parliament *by every means in their power* every man who turns his back upon these first necessities. It is more than ever necessary to keep their need of social reforms before them at this time, for I clearly see that *war* will be made an administrative excuse for all sorts of shortcomings and that nothing will have been done when the cholera comes again. Let it come twice again, severely, the people advancing all the while in the knowledge that it is . . . like Typhus Fever in the mass . . . a preventible disease, and you will see such a shake in this country as was never seen on earth since Samson pulled the temple down on his head."

Society may be roughly generalised into two groups. The larger of these is composed of persons who, according to R. L. Stevenson, "go through life like smiling images, pushed behind," and "swallow the universe like a pill." They accept all wrongs and evils as inevitable and are perfectly content with things as they are. Even when they find themselves up against unpleasant facts that directly

concern themselves, they only grumble, rail at their luck—or their Government—and make no further effort to alter them than is involved in putting a cross on a piece of paper. They are opposed to change generally, and distrust any innovation. Most of us do; it is an English trait.

But Dickens was no 'smiling image.' He who made others smile so frequently was grimly in earnest upon vital questions of reform. For he was one of the smaller group who are profoundly dissatisfied with things as they are and ever longing to make them as they ought to be. He was, in fact, a determined rebel against the social conditions of his day; those conditions of gross inequality, oppressive and unjust laws that were so rampantly in evidence a century ago and are by no means out of sight to-day. The word 'socialism' had not been coined then, but it can hardly be denied that, in the widest sense of that much abused and ill-comprehended word, Dickens was a socialist unawares. That is to say, he advocated a certain degree of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' for his fellow men and was definitely an agitator against those in high places who refused such common rights of humanity.

The words of his I have quoted show this plainly enough, where he advises working men "to keep out of Parliament, by every means in their power, every man who turns his back upon these first necessities." If this was not incitement to rebellion, I would like to know what is!

II.

Just as our modern rebel, Bernard Shaw, has made the general public swallow large doses of socialism unwittingly, as children swallow pills in jam, so Charles Dickens, in his day, made his great reading public swallow his bitter irony, his merciless ridicule, against the tyranny of the rich and strong towards the poor and weak. He was acutely conscious of what Disraeli, in his novel, *Sybil*, called "the two worlds," which exist side by side—the rich and the poor. And with his fundamental power of imaginative sympathy, of putting himself in the other fellow's place, he ranged himself, once and for all, on the side of the under dog.

That side was, as we know, far more conspicuously evident, and far more piteous, in his day than in ours. Thanks to his untiring efforts, and to the efforts of other great-hearted, noble-minded men and women of his time, many of the atrocious evils he saw around him have been abolished, while others, still existing, have been modified and brought under public control. He lived at a period when the worst effects of the Industrial Revolution were still rampant, defying all efforts at reform. All who have studied industrial history know how the invention and use of machinery made men rich and wealth made men unscrupulous; how, in the days before protective legislation (the first Factory Act was not passed till 1844, and that relating to women and children not till 1867), workers were paid the lowest subsistence wage possible, and children were sent into the labour market to eke out this starvation pittance. Employers

were growing richer and richer; the Poor Rate was growing higher and higher. When the farmers were most affluent the farm labourers had reached the lowest ebb of wages, and that, we know, caused the agitation against the Corn Laws which shook our country to its foundations.

Lord John Russell's New Reform Bill was read in the House of Commons in February, 1854, and withdrawn in April of that year under the excuse of war with Russia, which is what Dickens probably referred to when he said that war would be made an excuse for administrative shortcomings. Nothing much had been done since those Hungry Forties, when the people were starving everywhere and there were riots all over the country.

In Dickens's day little had been done to educate poor children. There had been sporadic attempts here and there. The Church of England National Association for educating the poor was started in 1811; infant schools in 1815; but the Industrial School Act was not passed till 1851. These first attempts at education—all honour to them—met with an incredible amount of opposition. When Hannah More, a generation before Dickens, started her village school she was subjected to the vilest insults from influential men in the district, whom she stigmatized as "savage monsters." One of these monsters, we read, actually objected to religious teachings, by which we may assume that the Sunday School movement, inaugurated by Robert Raikes in 1781, had not reached this benighted spot.

"This bringing religion into the country," wrote that 'monster,' "is the worst thing in the world for the poor, as it makes them useless and lazy." Hannah More writes of one large village as containing "an incredible multitude of poor, plunged in an excess of vice, poverty and ignorance beyond what one would suppose possible in a civilised Christian country."

The common view of her day, which persisted long after her, was that the poor and ignorant must be kept poor and ignorant in order that they might be forced to work for the rich and educated, and to bolster up this monstrous doctrine it was hypercritically asserted that they were much happier if not taken out of their own 'sphere' or taught to wish for anything better than they had; which, at that time, was an existence not far removed from the life of a sheep or hog. They were badly housed, in hovels little better than pigsties, and had nothing to occupy their minds beyond working, eating, drinking and sleeping till they died of old age, worn out before their time. They were to "order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters," and their betters were expected to be kind to them—as they were kind to their animals. One recalls the Lady Bountiful in a story of Mrs. Gaskell's as an illustration of this. She gave freely to the poor and was kind enough to them. But she steadfastly refused a piece of ground to build a school on; for the reason I have stated. She wanted to keep the poor ignorant.

Considering all this—and the weight of public opinion against him—one realises the immense courage of Dickens in attacking these

accepted doctrines and deliberately inciting the workers of his day to rebellion. That journal of his, *Household Words*, must have made the complacent squirm ! Obviously it made dear Lady Burdett-Coutts squirm, and put her " in a maze about it." No wonder, when you consider that the working man of that date had no court of appeal against his ' betters.' He was not represented in Parliament and he could rarely read or write. The only argument he could offer was violence. He could smash machinery and burn ricks to show he was dissatisfied, and this he jolly well did, in spite of the awful punishments inflicted on him for those crimes. When, therefore, Charles Dickens appealed to working men to make their collective power felt he was suggesting revolt, and that gentle, law-abiding lady, the Baroness, was naturally shocked.

But he was no law-breaker either. He recognised force as the very last resort, and one feels sure that his message in *Household Words* was intended rather as a warning to the rich than an incitement to the poor. He must have known well enough that few workers could afford to buy his paper, and still fewer could read it. Like his own Fat Boy he wanted to make the public flesh creep !

Some words of his in the letter I have quoted are almost prophetic. " Take my knowledge," he says, " of the state of things in this distracted land for what it may be worth a dozen years hence. The people will not bear for any length of time what they bear now. I see it written in every truthful indication that I am capable of discerning anywhere. And I want to interpose something between them and their wrath . . . I am sorry for what occurred in Hyde Park, but it is an illustration of what I have endeavoured to put before you . . . I mean the extraordinary ignorance, on the part of those who make the laws, of what is behind us and what is ever ready to break in, if it be too long despised. Some don't understand how things can be so ; many more don't care. And the dangerous result is brought about that people get no hearing till they are in tumult."

III.

Upon this note Dickens hammered continually in his novels and stories. We find it in *Bleak House*, in *A Tale of Two Cities*, in *The Chimes* ; in fact, I believe there are few of his books in which there is not, on some page, a covert warning of the danger to come ; an ironical sneer at the humbug and cant of the highly placed ; a clearly avowed sympathy with those who were then known as " the lower classes." Some people have averred that Dickens could not draw a gentleman, and I have no doubt that this misconception arises from the fact that he so often makes the so-called gentlemen of his books contemptible snobs in their supine indifference to the suffering of those they considered beneath them. He makes us laugh incontinently at the Doodles and Coodles and Boodles in *Bleak House*, and all through his works there is the recurring note of scorn for those well-to-do folk who lack any sense of social responsibility and accept their good fortune as a well-deserved gift from the Almighty.

(*Continued on page* 106)

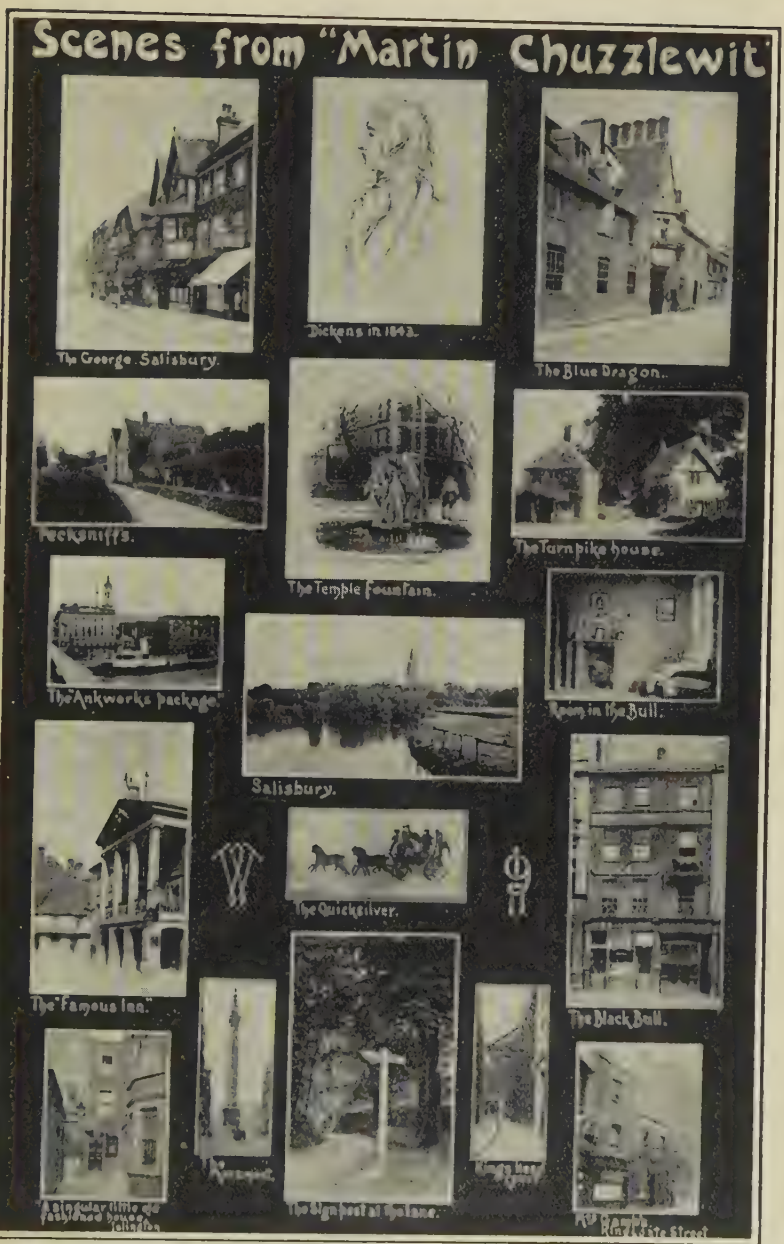


Photo by] [*T. W. Tyrrell*

In *Bleak House* we find the warning against future revolt of the unhappy in many passages.

In *Hard Times* we find some really ferocious satire against employers of labour who are coining gold at the expense of human life and decency. We read first a description of Coketown as vivid and as fiercely suggestive as Dickens could make his descriptions. It hurts us, rather, to read it, because we know that, even to-day, despite universal suffrage and Factory Acts, there still exists such places as Coketown, such homes as are therein depicted.

You must turn to *Hard Times* for the full quotation. Although it is not one of Dickens's best novels, it nevertheless abounds in samples of his mordant satire, and Bounderby is one of his most striking creations. He is, at once, an individual and a type. He represents the worst type of self-made man; one who has climbed unscrupulously to success over the bodies and souls of his fellow men and is inordinately proud of his low birth, or pretended low birth. Coleridge wrote:

> "And the Devil did grin, for his darling sin
> Is pride that apes humility."

That was Bounderby's form of pride. But although he is a type, one feels that he is strongly individualised and can see the man as Dickens saw him—his attempts at virtue, his desire for the approval of his fellows, his grudging kindnesses, as well as his unthinking cruelty and snobbishness.

In his housekeeper, Mrs. Sparsit, Dickens has drawn the perfect snob, as perfect as the Veneerings and 'Hamlet's Aunt,' who adored the 'blue blood' of the aristocracy. Someone ought to write a paper on Dickens's snobs.

Bounderby had a plausible picture of his own conception, of which we have heard echoes in our own day. When he interviews the decent workman, Stephen Blackpool, he airs this charming fiction: "You have never been one of the unreasonable ones," he says. "You don't expect to be set up in a coach and six and to be fed on turtle soup and venison with a gold spoon, as a good many of 'em do." He pretended to believe that this was the common desire of the workpeople in Coketown. It was not the only fiction of the mill-owners, as Dickens records. One was the often-stated conviction that any man could make a fortune if he chose. "Any capitalist there," says Dickens, "who had made £60,000 out of sixpence always professed to wonder why the sixty thousand nearest hands didn't each make £60,000 out of sixpence, and more or less reproached them, every one, for not accomplishing this little feat. What I did you can do. Why don't you go and do it?"

Another fiction of the mill-owners was that Coketown was ruined and they with it. They were ruined when they were required to send labouring children to school; they were ruined when inspectors were appointed to look into their works; when such inspectors considered it doubtful whether they were quite justified in chopping people up

with their machinery ; they were utterly undone when it was suggested that they need not always make quite so much smoke and so forth. This fiction generally took the form of a threat. " Whenever a Coketowner felt he was ill-used—that is to say, whenever he was not left entirely alone and it was proposed to hold him accountable for the consequences of any of his acts—he was sure to come out with the awful menace that he would ' sooner pitch his property into the Atlantic than submit." This, says our author, " had terrified the Home Secretary within an inch of his life on several occasions."

Well, we've heard the same kind of thing to-day !

The blue-blooded Mrs. Sparsit held the same views as her employer. In her conversation with the house porter, Bitzer, she asks :

" What are the restless wretches doing now ? "

" Merely going on in the old way, ma'am. Uniting and leaguing and engaging to stand by one another."

" It is much to be regretted," said Mrs. Sparsit, making her nose more Roman, her eyebrows more Coriolanian, in the strength of her severity, " that the united masters allow any such class combinations."

" Yes, ma'am," said Bitzer.

" Being united themselves, they ought, one and all, to set their faces against employing any man who is united with any other man," said Mrs. Sparsit.

" They have done that, ma'am," returned Bitzer, " but it rather fell through."

" I do not pretend to understand these things," said Mrs. Sparsit, with dignity, " my lot having been cast in a widely different sphere . . . I only know that these people must be conquered, and that it's high time it was done, once and for all."

Hard Times gives us many examples of this bitter satire. Dickens, we know, loathed cant and self righteousness almost as much as he loathed tyranny and cruelty. In Bounderby and Mrs. Sparsit we find all these detestable traits held up to scorn. Neither of this engaging couple know what pity or sympathy is, and they are revealed to us in all their naked ferocity —clothed only in his inimitable humour.

IV.

It was hatred of tyranny that made Dickens realise a retributative justice in the French Revolution when the majority of his fellow-countrymen could see nothing in it but the savage wickedness of the French people. To most English men and women the Bounderby and Sparsit view of revolt against authority was taken. Here Dickens the Rebel found himself once more up against those ' smiling images ' who desire to keep up an established order, even at the expense of justice. There are chapters in *A Tale of Two Cities* which prove conclusively his sympathy with the revolutionaries ; notably in Chapters VII, VIII and IX, where we are shown a French nobleman, as we should say, " asking for it and getting it in the neck," literally ! Deeply as Dickens abhorred violence, cruelty and revenge, which were all contrary to his noble and forgiving spirit, he could see

no other way by which the outraged masses of France could free themselves from their infamous oppressors save by revolt and revolution. The ironical opening to *A Tale of Two Cities* shows this, as it also shows his apprehension that our own country was ripe for rebellion. If any one doubts that Dickens was a rebel, let him read that book, *and read between the lines.* He will see how one Englishman, at least, sided with the rebels of France and raised his powerful voice against the wickedness and oppression of her rulers.

But perhaps even more stridently was that voice of his raised in *The Chimes*, which I take to be Dickens' most passionately bitter indictment against the canting smugness and selfishness of the comfortable classes in Victoria's reign. This may account for its being one of the least popular of his stories, for it is sad reading and contains little of his most delightful humour. One cannot doubt that he wrote it in a mood of fierce revolt. The characters of Sir Joseph and Lady Bowley, Alderman Cute and Mr. Filey stand out as impersonations of all that Dickens most despised and detested in his countrymen. For not only are they cold-blooded, pitiless and self-satisfied; they are also canting hypocrites. I've met such complacent gentry sometimes in our own day, and whenever I do, I feel a wild longing to shut them up in a room with *The Chimes* and not let them out till they have read every word of that book!

"I am the poor man's friend," says Sir Joseph, and proceeds to enlarge on that assumption.

Can one conceive more nauseating cant, or more savage irony? This Christmas book is, as I have said, not pleasant reading like *The Carol*, though it ends happily, and it may be taken as a sample of all that has been most adversely criticised in our author's work. It is outrageously sentimental; it is melodramatic; it is unrestrained; its people are symbolical rather than real; it lacks the subtle characterisation we find in his other Christmas books. *A Christmas Carol* and *The Cricket on the Hearth* are peopled by human beings uncoloured by emotional fantasy. *The Chimes* people are deeply coloured by the passionate feeling of their creator. Even Trotty Veck and Meg are of the stage rather than real life. But in no work of his, I would suggest, does Dickens reveal more of his essential self as "a reformer, heart and soul," as a rebel against the social order of his day—that "sorry scheme of things entire"—which he conspired to mould nearer to his heart's desire. Since he wrote a great change has come over us. We no longer regard those who work for us—who make all our clothes, comforts and luxuries, drive our trains and bring up our coal—as mere hands, machines to be used solely for the benefit of the well-to-do. On the contrary we are confronted by the possibility that these hands may become our masters; a possibility that Charles Dickens emphasised in his many warnings to his generation. Yes, a wonderful change of heart and mind is manifest in the present day, and I claim that our changed view of social problems has been brought about largely through the agency of Dickens, and of other writers who, like him, strove to influence their readers to revolt against social evils, to alter

unjust laws, and to fulfil the divine law of brotherly love one to another. I need but mention Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hood, Crabbe, Mrs. Gaskell, George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë in this connection. And among these Dickens stands first; the most gifted and powerful of our social reformers. His compelling power on human hearts can be doubted by no one who reads the peroration to *The Chimes*.

SOME RANDOM NOTES ON *MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT*

There is a Pecksniff Street in Liverpool.

* * * * *

A First Edition of "Underwoods" was sold, some ten years ago, for £330. It was inscribed to "My Dear Gosse" from "Yours affectionately, Robert Louis Stevenson, Chez Todgers, Pecksniff Street (South Place Hotel, Finsbury), August, 1887."

* * * * *

Tom Pinch was the name of the owner of a boat at Wapping, seen by the writer in June, 1928.

* * * * *

"The Man in the Monument," from 1833—1865, was John Bleaden.

* * * * *

The frame-work of the door of the Wren House in Love Lane, which formed the subject of an article in the Autumn *Dickensian*, is in the Old Court House on Hampton Court green, in which Sir Christopher Wren died.

* * * * *

A quaint old house in Terrett's Place, Upper Street, Islington, tallies very well with the lodgings of Ruth and Tom Pinch—"two small bedrooms and a triangular parlour."

* * * * *

The murder of Montague Tigg by Jonas Chuzzlewit is said to have been suggested by the murder near Radlett, Herts., of Mr. William Weare, of Lyons Inn, by Mr. Thurtell. Others favour the Wainwright murder.

* * * * *

There are said to be only three Irish characters in Dickens, one in Mrs. Tibbs's Boarding House in *Sketches by Boz*, the other two in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. These are the girl in Mrs. Pawkins's Boarding House in New York, who "popped her head out of the windows to see who it was" (Chapter 16), the other, Mr. Bevan's footman (Chapter 17).

* * * * *

As in *Pickwick*, at the White Hart, so at the Green Dragon, the ostler's name is Sam.

* * * * *

It was a William who drove David Copperfield to London (Chapter 19), and a William Simmons was the driver of the vehicle in which Martin Chuzzlewit rode to Hounslow (Chapter 13).

W.J.R.

THE HEART OF DICKENS'S LONDON*

LINCOLN'S INN, "in the heart of the fog," together with its Fields, is the heart of Dickens's London. Mr. E. Beresford Chancellor, who has many more London books to his name than there are letters in it, can always be relied upon to present to his readers a faithful picture of the life and times of those who were famous in the particular district with which he has to deal; and in the present volume he covers a small area which is second to none in numbering among its residents many of the most notable men and women of three centuries or more. And in the lavish illustrations with which the book is adorned, we find the Dickens fitness of things in a photograph of "Mr. Tulkinghorn's House in Lincoln's Inn Fields" cheek by jowl with pictures of the noble residences of Lord Newcastle and Sir John Soane. This is fully in keeping with the sentiment of Mr. Chancellor, which he has expressed on more than one occasion, that Dickens's characters are quite as much creatures of actual life as many very shadowy people whom we call human beings. And this coming from such an eminent writer on the great folk of the past, is praise indeed. Of course, this book is full of Dickens; he could not be kept out of a survey of the district, and the final chapter of the book is entirely devoted to Dickens's associations with the Fields, so as to properly round off the whole subject. We are pleased that Mr. Chancellor has gone to great pains to state most emphatically that the shop at No. 114 Portsmouth Street calling itself "The Old Curiosity Shop immortalised by Charles Dickens," has no association whatever with either the story or the novelist. We find here also a very good history of the "Black Jack" and "George IV" public houses, although Mr. Chancellor has to confess that he cannot say which of them stood for "The Magpie and Stump" of *Pickwick* fame.

In this book we get for the first time some reliable information regarding Bell Yard, to which Dickens devoted a special chapter in *Bleak House*. Through the kindness of the publishers we are enabled to give our readers a photograph of Bell Yard taken about 1866 before it was pulled down for the present Law Courts (see page 123). A reference to it will enable the reader to visualise the house in which the Neckett children resided above a chandler's shop.

The same courtesy enables us to reproduce on page 131 a picture of a part of Lincoln's Inn Fields which disappeared at the beginning of the present century when Aldwych was made; we refer to the quaint archway leading into Sardinia Street, through which the rioters passed to destroy the Roman Catholic Chapel, as described in *Barnaby Rudge*.

In short, here is a volume on the heart of Dickens's London replete with fact and fiction, a very welcome addition to any library.

W.D.

* "The Romance of Lincoln's Inn Fields," by E. Beresford Chancellor. Illustrated. 16s. Richards Press Ltd.

AN INTRODUCTION TO YOUNG MR. DICKENS

By LIONEL STEVENSON, Ph.D.

IF the work of any great writer is to be known thoroughly and intelligently, it must be studied in the chronological order of composition. Our first acquaintance with the author, to be sure, ought to be through his greatest masterpieces; but before we can claim to be even the humblest sort of authority on his writings we must have read them at least once in sequence, beginning with the earliest surviving examples. Some misguided enthusiasts argue that it is unfair to an author to direct attention to immature practice pieces, but such an attitude fosters unreasonable idolatry. It is no disgrace to an author that his first work should be inferior to his later achievements; on the contrary, growth is one of the clearest evidences for distinguishing true genius from the journeyman ability which is as competent in a first book as a fiftieth because the writer never departs from his conventional formula.

Few experiences in reading are more fascinating than that of tracing the expansion of a writer's powers, and seeing how the first uncertain outlines are eventually filled in with the colour and richness of assured art.

To complete this process of reconstructing the author's development, it is necessary also that one know something of the other writers who were popular and influential at the various stages of his career. A true estimate of his individuality cannot be obtained by setting him aloft on a pedestal and consigning all his contemporaries to oblivion; instead, we need to see how he was affected by current fashions and interests, to realize that he competed with capable rivals and surpassed them in fair competition.

This point of view is becoming established with regard to the masters of earlier centuries, and especially to Shakespeare, so that we begin to feel his greatness as a human, personal reality, instead of a remote abstraction. All good Dickensians ought to apply the same methods in their chosen realm; and since so little remains of Dickens's schoolboy juvenilia and of his newspaper reporting, we may begin our study with *Sketches by Boz*, considering them in the light of the state of English fiction in the early 1830's.

The *Sketches* are, relatively speaking, ignored by the modern reading public, not only because they are somewhat below the level of Dickens's later work, but also because they lack the sustained plot and the extended character drawing which give to novels their pre-eminent appeal. At the time of their first appearance, however, the *Sketches* gained enough applause to make the name of "Boz" familiar to the

reading public, and promised such talent that Chapman and Hall were willing to engage him for an important project. We must conclude, therefore, that the *Sketches* stood out conspicuously among the writings of 1834-35.

The most important fact about the *Sketches* was stated by "Boz" himself on the original title page, when he termed them "illustrative of every-day life and every-day people." We may search in vain in the popular books of those years for anything else that could be so described. There were the "fashionable novels" of Disraeli and Bulwer, populated exclusively with lofty patricians whose conversation consisted solely of epigrams and whose careers oscillated violently between political and amorous intrigues. There were the cloak and sword romances of Harrison Ainsworth and G. P. R. James, full of galloping horses and lurking villains and mistaken identities. There was Captain Marryat with his gory sea-battles, his ferocious captains and his irrepressible midshipmen who came up grinning after enough horror and hardship to destroy a normal human being ten times over. And then there were the host of sentimental boudoir tales of languishing heroines, of tears and swoons and delicate sensibility.

In contrast to all these exotic or impossible themes, Dickens turned to his own utterly commonplace surroundings in London. It is true that urban middle and lower class life was being treated by a few writers, such as Hook and Surtees, and, above all, Pierce Egan; but their work was coarse and farcical and egregiously "masculine." The remarkable fact about the "Boz" *Sketches*, when we consider the age and training of the author, and the taste of the time, is their gentleness and restraint. This is particularly significant when we remember the accusations of "caricature" and "unnaturalness" which are sometimes applied to Dickens's novels by modern critics. Compared with most of the characters of Marryat and Bulwer and the others, the characters in the *Sketches* are startlingly life-like, even though most of them are presented in only two or three pages. One is completely convinced that the author delineated the people he actually encountered in his daily work, whereas the other writers were obviously following stilted old conventions of the "heavy father," the "faithful servant," the "saintly clergyman," and so on.

Several of those early thumb-nail impressions by the young Boz can be recognised again in his later novels, expanded and enriched. In the first sketches they are too realistic to be memorable. We appreciate the verisimilitude as we read, but the impression soon fades into our subconsciousness. Latent in the affair of Mr. Augustus Cooper and Miss Billsmethi, for instance, is all the delicious comedy of Nicholas Nickleby's misadventures with Fanny Squeers. The cocksure Samuel Wilkins is a foreshadowing of Simon Tappertit. And the red-faced Mr. Rogers, haranguing a public-house parlour, strikes exactly the oratorical inanity which eventually graced the Reverend Mr. Chadband: "What's freedom? Not a standing army. What's a standing army? Not freedom. What's general happiness?

Not universal misery. Liberty ain't the window-tax, is it? The Lords ain't the Commons, are they?"

It will be noticed that even the names are commonplace and hard to remember in contrast with those of the later parallels. The *Sketches* are accurate snap-shots, whereas the subsequent novels are mighty canvasses. But the essential fact to be observed is that the characters in the novels are fundamentally the same as those in the *Sketches*, enhanced in colour and vitality, but not distorted.

Not in the successful novelists of the era, then, can we find literary antecedents for Dickens's early work. Rather we are reminded of the informal essayists of the preceding generation, that group who were contemptuously labelled "Cockneys" by the aristocratic reviews, but who brought to literature the charm of happy personality, whimsical fancy, and tolerant love of their fellows—Lamb, Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, de Quincey. In them we find the same enthusiasm for the topography and characters of London, and the same good-humoured penetration of human foibles, which appear in *Sketches by Boz*. And if we insist on seeking affinities for "Boz" in writers of fiction, we shall find outselves citing Jane Austen and Mary Mitford, whose mild irony and homely realism have much in common with his.

As in the case of the writers mentioned above, our interest in *Sketches by Boz* centres largely in the revelation of the author's own personality. Dickens naively shows himself so fascinated by every detail of the human life around him, so unaffectedly entertained by the common place, that he prattles about them in the full assurance that his reader will be equally thrilled. He does not feel the need of any plot or continuity or suspense, and so great is his zest that the reader actually does respond to it. We have brief glimpses of his childhood—gazing in hypnotic horror at Newgate where criminals were executed, and dodging furtively into pawnshops, "the door closing of itself after him to just its former width." But chiefly we see him at the time he was writing the *Sketches*—sociable and energetic, ranging all quarters of London in pursuit of business or pleasure. Theatres, public houses, Vauxhall Gardens, Greenwich Fair, these were his favourite haunts and topics, for these were the places of crowds and gaiety and an inexhaustible display of human types. "Somehow, we never can resist joining a crowd," he remarks in one of the *Sketches*, but the admission is not necessary, for the fact is revealed in almost every page of the book. This enthusiasm carries the *Sketches* along in spite of the many evidences of prentice handiwork—the awkward endings, the perfunctory moralisings, the laboured contrasts of humour and pathos, and the evasion of difficult scenes by "leaving it to the reader's imagination."

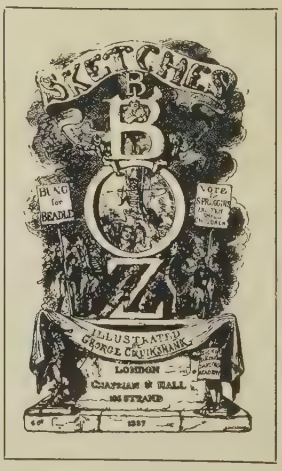
Dickens's naive delight in the every-day things around him gives the book another value also, as an introduction to his later works. It enables the modern reader to adjust himself to the background of English life of the time, which, though less than a century old is as remote from us as that of the middle ages. The absence of

fictional plot causes Dickens to dwell more explicitly on details of the social structure, which, later in his novels, were often taken for granted as familiar to his readers. In the *Sketches* he unconsciously wrote for future generations a "Handbook to Early Victorian England."

Highly significant, for instance, is the importance of the parish as the unit of government. As in the previous century, the established church was directly or indirectly responsible for most of the temporal duties in local affairs, police protection, fire-fighting, relief of poverty, education; each separate parish handled all such questions in its own way, without supervision by any central authority. Naturally, ignorance and stupidity often prevailed. Three generations before, Henry Fielding had begun to apply the power of fictional satire to these abuses, but at the beginning of Dickens's career the public conscience had not yet been roused.

Another established institution was seizure, eviction, or imprisonment for debt, a strange happy-go-lucky system which seems to have failed utterly in deterring impecuniosity, and in which the bailiff's officers fraternised cheerfully with the offenders. The wide range of financial irresponsibility, from extravagant leaders of fashion down to literally starving paupers, is vividly drawn in "Bung's Narrative." In this instance, as in the previous one, it was largely through Dickens's persistent assaults that the conditions have so completely changed. In the *Sketches* he adjusted his sights for the forthcoming sniping.

In all sorts of other respects we can turn to this book for information. We find exact definitions of such obsolete terms as "beadle" and "caudle"; we meet with the kidney-pie-man, the muffin boy, and the "nine-o'clock beer"; we learn of "Harmonic club" meetings far into the night, and of the May-day dances for the sweeps; we become familiar with the intricacies of the stage-coach system, the hackney coaches, and the other details of traffic. The topography of London is thoroughly covered, and the styles of costume, and the popular amusements. We are taken into the penetralia of dancing academies, private theatres, and the Inns of Court. Even in London these features have changed or vanished so completely that the present generation knows little of them, and throughout the rest of the English-speaking world not even their tradition remains. Yet the novels of Dickens and most of the other Victorians cannot be read intelligently unless these matters be comprehended. *Sketches by Boz*, therefore, is more than an introduction of young Mr. Dickens in person; it introduces us also to the whole world which he made his own.



A FURTHER AMERICAN NOTE

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF DICKENS TO MACLISE

OF his first visit to America, Dickens may be said to have kept an exact diary in the long letters which every mail steamer or sailing-packet conveyed to the novelist's closest friend and future biographer. As every Dickensian knows, the main passages of these letters were subsequently printed in *American Notes* and in the *Life*.

Of other letters written by Dickens to friends in England during his sojourn in the States, only six have, so far, been published. These were addressed to : Thomas Mitton (2), W. C. Macready, Miss Burdett-Coutts, Thomas Beard and Henry Austin, and in them are to be found more than one incident or impression, grave or humorous, not included in the official news-budget.

A seventh letter, addressed to Daniel Maclise and, we believe, hitherto unpublished, gives us yet another picture of American manners, travel and scenery in the early forties. The variety introduced by Dickens in these letters is all the more remarkable that four of the seven and one letter to Forster were written on the same day (March 22nd, 1842).

A. DE SUZANNET.

" Baltimore, Twenty-second March, 1842.

My very dear Mac,

From the depths of the Far West, wither we are now going ; from the heights of the Alleghany mountains which we are about to ascend ; from the small cabin of the canal boat in which we embark ; from the surface of the Lakes we have yet to traverse ; and amidst the silence of the broad Prairies we shall shortly cross ; nay, from the gloom of the Great Mammoth cave in Kentucky, and high above the roar and spray of dread Niagara, my voice shall be heard cursing the Academy. I will call down imprecations on the head of Martin Archer Shee from the solitudes where the Indians used to roam, and from which the white man has driven everything but the red sun which lingers there every evening as it did of yore (oh beautiful, beautiful !). I will anathematize the green table and *un*holy water bottles in the splendour of early morning, and the softened beauty of the night. I will spit upon Trafalgar Square, and set my heel upon the council chamber. The aged and staggering associates shall dwindle, peak and pine, beneath my withering blight, and the ranks of the R.A's shall be thinned by me.

And could you, could you, Mac, lose the recollection of us, in the crowned presence of the King of Prussia ? Was Devonshire Terrace forgotten, in the monarch's state ? Was it a necessary consequence of being out of your sight (and good God, my dear boy, what an eye you have) that we should be out of your mind, likewise ? Oh Mac, Mac ! The 'Caledonia,' having no letter from you on board, was ashamed of her mission, and put back. The very ocean rebelled at the enormity. How it must have gone to your heart, what coals of fire were heaped upon your head, when you had those two letters from me, and especially that one with the Ball bill of fare and Kate's portrait ! You were penitent *then*. I know you were.

We have been travelling a great deal. Forster has a few scraps of description, in trust, as usual. As to scenery, we really have seen very little as yet. It is the same thing over and over again. The railroads go through the low grounds and swamps, and it is all one eternal forest, with fallen trees mouldering away in stagnant water and decayed vegetable matter and heaps of timber in every aspect of decay and utter ruin. I dress up imaginary tribes of Indians, as we rattle on, and scatter them among the trees as they used to be, sleeping in their blankets, cleaning their arms, nursing brown children, and so forth. But saving the occasional log hut, with children at the door, or a slave house, or a white man with an axe and a great dog, long miles and miles are wholly destitute of life, or change of any kind.

You will be familiar, very likely, on the day this reaches you, with all that I have written to Forster. I will let it have the freshness of novelty, and spare you its repetition. He tells me great things of your Hamlet. What would I give to see it ! But we shall be home, please God, before the exhibition closes, and that's a comfort.

Do you feel as though you would like some summer rides, some summer walks, some dinners, strolls at night, and minor theatre visitations ? Do you feel as if, when we come home, you would like us, even better than the Academy, for a few weeks ? For myself, if Shee stood bodily upon the pier of Liverpool when I leaped ashore, I would forget the past, and shake hands with him. Yes, I would.

Imagine Kate and I, a kind of Queen and Albert, holding a levee every day (proclaimed and placarded in newspapers) and receiving all who choose to come. Imagine—but you can't imagine, without seeing them—how now and then a republican boy, of surpassing and indescribable free and easiness comes in among the company, and keeping his cap upon his head, inspects me at his leisure. We had one the other day who remained two hours, and took no other refreshment during the whole time than an occasional pick at his nose, or survey of the street from the open window, whence he invited other boys to come up and do the like. Imagine, when I landed from a steamboat in New York, in a dense crowd, some twenty or thirty people, screwing small dabs of fur out of the back of that costly great coat I bought in Regent Street ! Imagine these public receptions occurring *every day*, and how I feel towards the people who come in fresh, and full of speech and questioning, when I am quite tired out ! Every railroad car is like a great omnibus. Whenever we come to a town station, the crowd surround it, let down all the windows, thrust in their heads, stare at me, and compare notes respecting my appearance, with as much coolness as if I were a marble image. What do you think of *that*, as you would say yourself.

Ever, my dear Mac,

Your faithful (though unacademic) friend,

Charles Dickens.

My best regards to all your house."

The following postscript to this letter is in the hand of Mrs. Dickens:

"Dear Mr. Maclise,

I only add a word to put you in mind there is such a being in existence which I fear you have forgotten unless that heavenly portrait has awakened some dormant recollections. Pray write to us, you do not know what a delight it is to receive letters from our friends in this distant land. Does Marion still reign paramount in your heart or has some other bright being taken her place? It is just dinner time so I only add that I am always

Your very sincere friend,

Catherine Dickens.

My beautiful sketch of our darlings is more admired than I can possibly describe. It is in great demand wherever we go and Willis, the author, asked me to give it to him. Imagine such impudence! and audacity!"

THE REVISED "ECKEL"*

WHEN "The First Editions of the Writings of Charles Dickens and their Values" was published nearly twenty years ago, the work was deservedly hailed as one of the best bibliographies ever written. Although specially dedicated to "Lovers of fine and rare books" and published in a limited edition, it was the kind of book to appeal to all Dickensians. Ever since its publication in 1913, "Eckel," as the volume is familiarly and affectionately designated, has remained the standard and only complete bibliography of Dickens.

This great book was quickly sold out and copies were soon at a premium. Moreover, the author realized that his work, however excellent, was not devoid of errors and that in the vast field of Dickensian literature new discoveries of bibliographical importance were constantly occurring. So after a lapse of twenty years Mr. Eckel rightly decided that a revised and enlarged edition of his bibliography should be given to Dickens-collectors.

The book was published in New York in October, 1932, and in England a few weeks later. The printing was limited to 750 copies at £3 3s., and 250 copies of a large-paper issue at 5 guineas.

Readers of the revised bibliography will at once recognize that Mr. Eckel has been at pains to overhaul and re-write many passages of his original work.

The author is to be congratulated on the introduction of several notable additions and improvements, among which may be mentioned the data relating to *The Strange Gentleman*, the *Library of Fiction*, and the *Great International Walking Match*. There is an entirely

*"The First Editions of the Writings of Charles Dickens." Their Points and Values. A Bibliography by John C. Eckel. Revised and Enlarged. New York: Maurice Inman. London: Maggs Bros. 1932.

new chapter entitled "Collation of Back Wrappers" which should prove very useful to collectors.

Mr. Eckel has carefully revised and brought up to date the market values of the various items which he describes. In this connection it may perhaps be objected that the prices listed are almost exclusively those of American auction-rooms or those asked by American dealers. Yet the most recent prices quoted by English booksellers or those obtained at the latest sales of Messrs. Sotheby should be equally important to collectors, even in the United States.

Whilst it possesses these new features of real interest and value, we must confess that in other respects the revised bibliography has somewhat disappointed us.

Several errors contained in the first edition, which had been pointed out to the author when his book was reviewed in 1913, or which have been the subject of more recent correction (in *The Dickensian* and elsewhere) continue to glare at us from the pages of the revised edition.

In spite of the increase in price (the two issues of the first edition were published by Chapman and Hall at 12s. 6d. and 25s. respectively), the new edition does not compare very favourably with the first in the printing of either text or illustrations.

We do not understand why Mr. Eckel has given such prominence to the Maria Beadnell and Kolle correspondence, yet fails to include in his enumeration of Dickensiana items of capital interest. For instance, he does not even mention the *Letters of Charles Dickens*, edited by his sister-in-law and his eldest daughter, nor the volumes of published letters to Wilkie Collins, W. H. Wills, Mark Lemon, Baroness Burdett-Coutts and Thomas Beard.

We believe that many readers will object to the publicity given to certain "collectors" in the pages of Mr. Eckel's Bibliography. It is quite proper and even necessary to identify items of exceptional rarity and importance by naming their owners, past or present. In fact, these designations are of interest both to bibliographers and to collectors when the owners in question are bibliophiles in the real sense of the term. But do we want to know *who* paid $2,250 for a Part I of *The Pickwick Papers*? And when we are informed that one of Mr. Eckel's "Prime" Pickwicks changed hands five times in as many years, do we care to have the names of these gentlemen "of great fortune" enshrined in a standard bibliography and handed down to posterity as genuine Dickensians and book-lovers?

A detailed criticism of Mr. Eckel's purely bibliographical work is not within the scope of this article. Such criticism would fill more than twenty pages of *The Dickensian* and be of slight interest to those readers who have no occasion to consult the volume under discussion. We shall therefore content outselves with noting one or two of the inaccuracies or mistakes which occur in the opening chapters.

Under the heading "Dickens's First Efforts," we find the following paragraph:

" The *Sketches* were written as separate papers for three publications, namely: 'The Monthly Magazine,' 'The Evening Chronicle' and 'Bell's Life in London.'" This is a mistake. The *Sketches* appeared originally in (at least) five publications; and no less than four of them listed by Eckel as having first been printed in the three volume edition (First and Second Series), were published in "The Morning Chronicle" before they appeared in "The Evening Chronicle."

As pointed out in *The Dickensian* a year ago, *The Hospital Patient* was not originally printed in the Second Series of the *Sketches*, as Mr. Eckel believes, but in the number for August 6th, 1836, of "The Carlton Chronicle of Politics, Literature, Science and Art."

It was to be hoped that in his long chapter dealing with *The Pickwick Papers*, Mr. Eckel would make a careful study of the textual differences which are to be found in the various issues of the parts. In recent years, Messrs. George W. Davis, Thomas Hatton and the late John F. Dexter have contributed most valuable data to the bibliography of *Pickwick* as regards the variations in the letterpress. In fact, their researches have proved most conclusively that the study of these variations is indispensable in determining the priority of issue of each of the nineteen parts. Unfortunately Mr. Eckel has elected to ignore entirely this fundamental element of any bibliography, or rather he is content to dismiss it with the following remark: "There are minor peculiarities in *Pickwick*, many of a textual nature. It may safely be said that if the major requirements of a good *Pickwick* are to be found the minor ones usually are present." This airy dismissal of an essential problem would be easier to understand if Mr. Eckel, by successfully establishing what he calls the "major" points, had entirely satisfied himself as to the characteristics of the veritable first issue of each of the parts. But although he gives us a detailed collation of the Bruton copy (the description of the wrappers and advertisements fills 32 pages), he cannot even claim a priority of issue for this "representative" copy when compared with the other *prime* Pickwicks which he has discovered. He concludes with this cryptic pronouncement: "Let it be repeated that no two copies agree fully with this collation, due to the irregularity of business methods and the various obstacles which presented themselves."

Although we have considered ourselves called upon to qualify our appreciation of Mr. Eckel's revised bibliography with some adverse criticism, it is our pleasant duty to conclude this review with an acknowledgment to the author. In a slip which accompanies every copy of his work, Mr. Eckel has very kindly and generously announced that purchasers of the book will receive without further charge a "Supplement." In this supplement will be incorporated such corrections and additions as may usefully result from criticisms and suggestions addressed to the author. We are convinced that, enriched with these addenda, Mr. Eckel's revised bibliography will be recognised as a worthy companion and successor to the great First Edition.

A. de Suzannet.

A BELIEVER'S HERESIES

By J. W. T. LEY

WHY do we love Dickens ? It is well that we should sometimes reflect and ask ourselves that question. We Dickensians too often deserve the rude things that are sometimes said about us as blind idolaters. We are so apt to lose a sense of perspective, and it does us no harm if we sometimes pull ourselves up sharply and take stock, as it were. We know what Mr. Bernard Shaw has said about Shakespeare upon occasions—absurdly extreme things, outrageously extreme, untrue really—yet, when we have read those remarks and thought how ridiculous they were, have we not often suddenly found ourselves thinking, " Yes—but——" ? Mr. Shaw's only purpose has been to pull us up with a jerk, so to speak. We have been in danger as a nation of doing with Shakespeare what so many Dickensians do with Dickens—putting him on a pedestal whose top is nearly out of sight and so blinding ourselves with our adoring upward looks, that we cannot see other authors who really are much more within the range of vision of many of us. These things are always in such danger of degenerating into poses and cults—and all cults are born of snobbishness. Mr. Shaw has no other purpose than to bring us back to earth. He uses caricature to drive home a truth. Now, I propose to adopt a somewhat similar method with Dickens. Unkind things are said very often about Dickens and about his work. They are not said in the spirit I have attributed to Mr. Shaw. They are meant, and the impressive thing is the anger that mention of Dickens's name seems to generate in the hearts of those who do not care for him. So I am going to ask, " Why is Dickens so popular ? " and to try to answer the question. For he *is* popular, you know, though possibly even many members of the Fellowship are not aware how popular. I cannot drive the fact home more forcibly perhaps than by the simple statement of an unchallengeable fact. That fact is that his books to-day sell at least as well as those of any living novelist. This, I say, is just a statement of fact—as unarguable as any of Euclid's axioms. It is an unaccountable fact if some of the criticisms are true. One of our successful living novelists has admitted it frankly. " I cannot read Dickens," he has written in the public press, " and I can only contemplate his popularity with polite wonder." A taste for Dickens is a matter of temperament. I suppose it is very like the taste for tomatoes ; you like him or you don't like him, and that's that. I have no quarrel with the person who, like the novelist I refer to, says, " I can't read Dickens : I can't understand his popularity." He does not tell us that Dickens wrote piffle. But I confess that the man who asserts in a tone of voice which betokens bad temper that Dickens could not write for nuts makes me cross. " Do people really behave like that ? " you may ask. Yes, they do—people of the highest education, people who wield some influence in certain literary circles. I write quite frankly as a keen Dickensian. I love Dickens for the all-sufficient reason that by means of his clean, hearty humour he

effected and is effecting much good in this world. But I want you to try to believe that if I think of books I do not think only in terms of Dickens. There *are* people like that, and I have less patience with them than I have with the other people about whom I have just written. But it seems to me hopelessly absurd, just because you don't like roast beef, to say that all roast beef is poisonous. And behind the utterances of these detractors of Dickens is every sign of that impotence which an irritable person sometimes feels when he can't persuade an acquaintance to see a thing exactly from his point of view. There is one literary paper of very high standing indeed which consistently for much more than half a century has spoken in this irritable tone of voice. It declared in the very middle of last century that Mr. Dickens—then at the very zenith of his career—had no intellectuality ; it declared a year or two ago that he was the most quoted author in the public press to-day only because the journalist had a need to be humorous in a hurry. In the years between it has never reviewed books by or about Dickens save in that same spirit. Why ? I think I know the answer. Dickens is popular with the common people, with the people who know little about literary values. The common people who are not " literary " love Dickens. It is because their hearts are sound—situated in exactly the proper place and beating regularly and warmly. And the detractors of Dickens that I refer to are snobs, living in a past age, who, if they went on breathing for another hundred years, would go on all the time feeling cross because the House of Commons welcomes to its councils navvies like John Ward, labourers like Will Thorne, workhouse brats like Will Crooks, and engine cleaners like Jim Thomas.

Now I propose to quote some of the criticisms of Dickens that have been—and are being—uttered. I propose to take the deliberate considered utterances of two persons—one a famous man whose opinions command respectful consideration, the other an anonymous " man in the street," whose views, *as his*, do not matter a tiny bit, but to whom I pay attention, because he is a little more explicit than most people who hold his views, and because he does, I think, detail the whole of the objections that are offered to Dickens as a novelist. In each case the declaration of atheism appeared a few years ago, but together they sum up the whole catechism of the unbeliever. They say all that their kind has to say.

Let me deal with the famous man first. His name was Arnold Bennett. He wrote a series of articles for a popular periodical entitled, if I remember aright, " My Literary Heresies." In addition to saying that Dickens was devoid of a feeling for beauty and for literature, that he was guilty of a constant search for ugliness, that he had no power of construction, that his pathos is merely comic, that his humour is monotonous, and that his style, though often vigorous, is nothing more : he told us that Tennyson and Longfellow were merely great minor poets, and that Thackeray and George Eliot were not great novelists any more than was Dickens. As far as I remember he said nothing of Shakespeare, but that may have been because he did not

possess Mr. Bernard Shaw's pluck. It is perfectly obvious that "criticisms" such as these scarcely call for an answer. If Mr. Bennett really could see no greatness in Tennyson, it is not altogether surprising that he should have been able to see no beauties in Dickens. Yet are there no beauties in such creations as Tom Pinch, Trotty Veck, Bob Cratchit, Caddy Jellyby, Captain Cuttle, Clara Peggotty? Is there no beauty in the story of Caleb Plummer's treatment of his blind daughter?

I have heard many ridiculous "criticisms" of Dickens, but I do not think I have heard any to compare with the assertion that he was guilty of a constant search after ugliness. It is an assertion which cannot be substantiated, and could emanate only from the most superficial, or the most perverse, reader. Dickens did not need to search for ugliness: it met him at every turn. But he went to it in his search for beauty. He spent his life searching for beauty where it was least likely to be found, and never failed to find it. He believed, as he said in more than one speech, that Virtue goes barefoot as well as shod, that she may be found in the by-ways of the world, and that it is good and pleasant and profitable to track her out and follow her. This is the very characteristic in which Dickens differs from most novelists of the past half-century. It is never necessary to search for ugliness, and not many novelists, thank God, have been guilty of doing so, but too many of our novelists see only the ugliness. The beauty is often closely veiled, but it is always there, and can be discovered with a little search. Dickens, throughout his life, persistently searched for good, where the world is prone to see nought but evil, and when he found it—as he always did—he held it up so that all could see the contrast. It is for this that we love him. It is in this that he contrasts so splendidly with so many of our novelists.

Of Dickens's powers of construction I shall have something to say presently, as well as of his humour and pathos. As to Mr. Bennett's assertion that Dickens's style is vigorous and nothing more, is it begging the question to respond "What more is needed?" The late Mr. Teignmouth Shore defined literary style as ability to express one's self clearly without outraging any of the requirements of language; and judging Dickens by this standard, Mr. Shore held that he was a great artist. I think he was right.

Let me come to the other gentlemen. We can only know him as "Scrogs," the pseudonym with which he signed his declaration of unfaith. I take his opinions not because they are his, therefore, but because they are both comprehensive and typical. That is to say, they do, I think, express the whole case of his kind against Dickens. The Secretary of a provincial branch of the Dickens Fellowship wrote a letter to his local paper in which, after briefly detailing some of the good works that had been done by the Fellowship, he asked the numerous lovers of Dickens resident in the town, to become members of what he described as "a veritable living monument to the greatest novelist of the nineteenth (or any other) century, whose works will never succumb to the ravages of time." This evoked the utterance

VANISHED DICKENS'S LONDON

Bell Yard

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From a photograph by the late Walter Spiers

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to which I now propose to refer. First of all, with the charitable work of the Fellowship " Scrogs " was in accord, but at the same time he asked the reason for the Society's existence. " A Browning Society," said he, " we can understand ; a Society for the study of George Eliot or Meredith might furnish its *raison d'etre*. But for the study of Dickens ! " (note of exclamation here) " the idea is too absurd. The greatest novelist of last century, indeed ! Surely a writer the other day gave Dickens the highest meed of praise of which he was worthy when he called him a glorified newspaper reporter !* As a novelist he is by no means a success, although he possessed a surprising accuracy of observation and power of minute description. Lacking those qualities so necessary to an artist in fiction, capacity of telling a story, insight into human nature, power of pathos and humour, the works of Dickens fail to attract readers of cultivated taste, and are only admired by a few with whom caricature and grotesqueness are a merit, and the ugly and wonderful a delight."

Of course, all the good Dickensians in the town rallied round the standard, and for weeks the poor Editor of the newspaper in question must have been at his wit's ends. I need hardly say that some extremely indefensible things were said by some of these enthusiasts. I was General Secretary of the Fellowship at the time, and when at last the Editor said that there were other matters of some importance besides Dickens and " Scrogs," the local secretary sent me a complete collection of the letters with a request that I would write a column wind-up. I did so, and I caused a fluttering in the dovecotes which must have made " Scrogs " green with envy. I made enemies. There is one enthusiastic lady Dickensian who " cuts me dead " even to this day, because I was honest enough to say that from certain points of view I admitted the truth of some criticisms of Dickens. I have known lots of people of that kind. I know one who never writes of Dickens save as " The Master," with a capital " M." I know another who will not have in his house a book that does not contain some reference to Dickens. I once wrote in a weekly magazine that I recognised that in some respects Thackeray was a superior novelist to Dickens, and I had a letter from the Secretary of a branch of the Dickens Fellowship informing me that if I could publish that sort of stuff I ought not to be Secretary of the Fellowship. And yet, it is one of the puzzles of my life how to convince people that I am not that sort of person ! It really is very difficult. Speaking as a keen Dickensian, I have no hesitation in saying that it is that sort of person who provides the splenetic anti-Dickensian with some show of justification. I hold with Dickens himself that " the man who knows no subject is *next* troublesome to the man who knows only one subject."

Let us take the standard set up by these critics. That is to say, let us judge Dickens from the point of view of the cold-blooded critic. I hasten to say that that is exactly how he ought not to be judged.

Thackeray said of *The Carol*: " Who can listen to objections

* Not long ago Mr. Stanley Baldwin called him an inspired newspaper reporter. Somebody will call him an inspired photographer one of these days.

regarding such a book as this ? It seems to me a public benefit, and a personal kindness to every man and woman who reads it." So would I say in regard to Dickens's writings as a whole. I have about as much—or as little—patience with the " art for art's sake " fetish as Mr. A. G. Gardner used to have with Mr. Lloyd George. I think *heart* matters enormously more than art. But we will agree to meet these people on their own ground ; and so I declare that I think it would be impossible to justify the assertion that Dickens was the greatest of all our novelists. In almost the first requirement he was an almost complete failure. He was a very poor hand at constructing a novel. I think it is true that he gave us only one novel that can be said to be really well constructed—*A Tale of Two Cities.* He nearly succeeded with a second—*Great Expectations*—but in the last chapter heart got the better of art. It is obvious that Pip should have remained a lonely man, and it is known that Dickens intended that he should ; but Lytton urged a happier ending, and in deference to his suggestion the chapter was altered and Pip and Estella were married and " lived happily ever after." For myself—when in my normal state—I find no fault with Boz for this—indeed, it is just because he was such a Philistine that I love Dickens—but I am wearing " Scrogs's " glasses for the moment, and so am strongly of opinion that it was an offence against " art." No such offence was committed in *A Tale of Two Cities.* The story is told perfectly—worked up quite naturally to the great sublime crisis—but at a great cost. It is difficult. to criticise this book, for the story of Sydney Carton's noble sacrifice really is above criticism, but for the present sentiment is cast aside. The story, I say, is told successfully at great cost. Dickens's greatest gift was said, by the late Mr. Teignmouth Shore, to have been that of characterisation, but I offered to argue with him that before even this should be placed that wonderful gift of humour. His humour was his strongest and best weapon against tyranny and wrong ; all his most earnest purposes depended upon it for their furtherance. Without it he would have been nothing. And from *A Tale of Two Cities* it is missing almost entirely. The characters, with the one exception of Carton, fail to impress us, and there is nothing in the book but the heroic sacrifice of the dissipated barrister which leaves a very lasting impression behind. That noble figure, standing alone—silhouetted—on the steps of the scaffold will never become dim ; but it is that, and that only, which will keep the book alive.

Putting aside the *Christmas Books* (nothing, Mr. Cuming Walters, would induce me to criticise the *Carol*) and taking any of Dickens's long novels, other than the two that I have spoken of, and looking at them from this callously critical standpoint, not one of them will stand the test. His love for the stage " spoiled " almost all his books. In every one of them we have frequent flashes of limelight, and the orchestra is continually playing. George Gissing is unquestionably right when he says that Dickens planned a novel as though plotting for the stage. This *is* his failing—from the " art " point of view, of course. His plots are stagey. Rarely are they concerned with the

plain motives of human life. Somewhat far-fetched eccentricity and coincidence play altogether too large a part. *Oliver Twist* is melodrama, pure and simple. *Nicholas Nickleby* is little more. In none of the books do the incidents follow one another naturally. I wonder how many people after a first perusal of, say *Dombey and Son*, could tell accurately what the story is. They will remember incident after incident, but they will not be able to connect these incidents and tell the story properly. And the reason is, of course, that the author himself has not connected them. This is the distinguishing feature of Dickens. He was exceptionally strong in incident, but not in the knack of being able to link up the incidents so as to make one perfect whole. *Our Mutual Friend* is another example. Dickens realised this failing of his and strove to master it. He tried hard with *Bleak House*. I don't know what he might have done with *Edwin Drood*. So far as it has gone, the book is perfectly constructed, but at the same cost as in *A Tale of Two Cities*. Where is the Dickens humour? Where is the Dickens of *Chuzzlewit* and *Nickleby* and *Copperfield* and *Dombey*? I can only catch very fleeting glimpses of him—and all the time the sound of the creaking of the machinery is present in my ears.

In *Martin Chuzzlewit* there is practically no plot. The story moves in the most irresponsible way—Martin, for instance, had no business at all to go to America—yet there are scenes or incidents in this book which remain stamped upon the mind, in bold relief, when most of the scenes in *Our Mutual Friend*, *Bleak House* and *Little Dorrit*—in each of which there is a laboured attempt at a plot—have become dim. The effect of this failing was inevitably the introduction of coincidence. Example after example could be quoted. *Oliver Twist* is full of examples. In *Nicholas Nickleby* Smike is, by a wonderful coincidence, found to be Ralph's son. In *Bleak House* we have a similar coincidence in the identification of Lady Dedlock as Esther Summerson's mother. In *Dombey and Son*, Walter Gay is the only one saved from the wreck; in *David Copperfield*, not only does David go down to Yarmouth on the very night of the storm, but Steerforth is drowned within sight of the home he had ruined, and the man whose heart he had broken is killed in the attempt to rescue him; in *Barnaby Rudge*, Hugh is by another extraordinary coincidence found to be Sir John Chester's son; even the whole of the story of *A Tale of Two Cities* turns upon the accidental likeness of Sydney Carton to Evremond. All this is melodramatic. Dickens, too, was led from the path of "true art" by the very characteristic for which we love him so well—his optimism. Could there be anything less convincing than Mrs. Gummidge's conversion, or Mr. Micawber's sudden display of energy, which eventually enables him to write "Magistrate" after his name? Had Dickens been true to "art," Mr. Micawber would have ended as he had begun and continued—for remember that when he sailed for Australia, he must have been near 60 years old, and men who have waited so long as that for something to turn up, usually wait till the end—but Dickens and his public had made a friend of Micawber and they would be pleased to know that he had at last attempted to turn

something up by his own efforts, and that he had succeeded. Besides, "It's never too late to mend." Scrooge's conversion is convincing, but surely Tackleton's is not? At mid-day he is the same sour individual that he has been all along, yet at night he is completely changed, and is the brightest and best tempered of a happy party. Is it likely that a man would change his whole nature so completely with such remarkable suddenness? Of course it is not. But Dickens is an optimist, and all things must end happily, and so art is thrown to the winds. As a critic, one regrets it, but as a human being one blesses the author, and thanks him with all sincerity. Even Mr. Mell, the usher at Mr. Creakle's school in *David Copperfield*, a young man with not an ounce of individuality in him, who, in real life would never mount to prosperity, is referred to in the last chapter as Dr. Mell. He has been kind to David and virtue must be rewarded.

(To be concluded)

A NECESSARY CORRECTION.

SOME MIS-STATEMENTS FROM AMERICA

IT is an impossibility to issue corrections in these pages to all the inaccurate statements constantly being made about Dickens; nor is it always necessary to do so, as newspaper and magazine articles are generally of an ephemeral character, and the mis-statements are soon forgotten. But when such statements are made in books devoted to the study of some branch or other of Dickens, and written by people who are regarded as experts, then the matter certainly calls for comment in these pages.

Two flagrant cases of misrepresentation have lately come to my notice, and both, I regret to say, emanate from America. The first occurs on page one of Mr. Eckel's revised edition of his well-known bibliography, and forms a new paragraph to the original edition of 1913. In that edition Mr. Eckel rightly referred to the error which Forster made on first publishing the "Life," in stating that the title of Dickens's first piece of published fiction was "Mrs. Joseph Porter over the way." In the revised edition, after saying "This mis-statement was not corrected until the tenth edition of the biography," Mr. Eckel makes this remarkable statement presumably as one of the "discoveries" which he promises us. "To (*sic*) those commentators who followed Forster, for instance, James Payn and Robert Langton, who devoted themselves to the earlier life of the novelist, the error was continued. It was not until 1910 that the documentary evidence was produced which proved that Dickens' first effort was 'A Dinner at Poplar Walk.'" The inclusion of such a note in a revised edition of a book originally published twenty years ago, and which has deservedly become an authoritative document, is absolutely unwarranted and at once detracts from the real value of the exhaustive details of "points" to be observed by the collectors of first editions.

Let us examine the facts. It is true that Forster did not correct

the error until the tenth edition of the "Life," but that was within a few months of publication. Eckel leads the uninitiated to suppose it might have been years. The first edition of Volume One of the "Life" bears the date 1872 on the title page; it was actually issued in the autumn of 1871, and no less than ten editions were called for within a few weeks. By a note dated 23rd December, 1871, printed with the tenth edition, this and other errors were corrected; and this note was again printed in the first edition of Volume Two of the "Life" issued a year later. Now as to James Payn; his contribution was a review of Volume One of the "Life"; it was published in the January, 1872, part of Chambers's Journal, and presumably written in the early winter of 1871. It was later issued in pamphlet form. The case of Langton is different; and more serious. I have before me as I write the "Subscribers' Edition" dated 1883 (presumably the first edition) of "The Childhood and Youth of Charles Dickens," also a "revised and enlarged edition" dated 1891. In both of these on page 108 the title of Dickens's first contribution to any monthly magazine is correctly given as "A Dinner at Poplar Walk," with a footnote to say that in the collected "Sketches" the title was changed to "Mr. Minns and His Cousin." Other "commentators who followed Forster" were A. W. Ward ("English Men of Letters" Series, 1882), F. Marzials ("Great Writers" Series, 1887), R. H. Shepherd (Bibliography in Vol. 2, "Plays and Poems of Dickens," 1885), Kitton ("Novels of Charles Dickens," 1897), to name some of the earliest and acknowledged authorities, and *not one of them makes the error imputed to them by Mr. Eckel*; nor can I find any other authorities who do so. Moreover, the "documentary evidence" which Mr. Eckel says was not forthcoming until 1910 was actually published by Kitton, ten years previously in his "The Minor Writings of Dickens" a valuable supplement to his earlier work mentioned above. Now please, Mr. Eckel, on what authority do you base this statement?; and if you have not troubled to go to original sources for every piece of information contained in your bibliography (the real value of which I am not in a position to question, as the rareties therein dealt with in detail do not pass through my hands) the value of the whole book is open to doubt.

A few pages further on in Mr. Eckel's book I find another error, quite as "inexcusable" as he says Forster's was. In dealing with "The Evening Chronicle" he states that John Black was the editor, and that Dickens, when "asked to contribute to its columns, proposed that his articles should be similar to those he was at that time writing for the 'Old Monthly Magazine.'" This is a new piece added to this revised edition, and shows how little versed is the writer in the life of Dickens. In the collected letters of Dickens there is one to George Hogarth, the editor of "The Evening Chronicle," dated 20th January, 1835, in which Dickens offers "a continuation of light papers in the style of my 'Street Sketches.'" Now the "Street Sketches" had appeared in "The Morning Chronicle," although Mr. Eckel does not appear aware of that fact and erroneously states that the four sketches

there printed were actually written expressly for the two-volume edition of *Sketches by Boz*. In addition to this, any one who has read the contributions to " The Monthly Magazine " (note the correct title) can surely see they are not " Street Sketches " at all, but short stories.

Eckel is a recognised authority on all that appertains to first editions of Dickens, their " prints " and their prices. It is a pity that he has departed from his realm of authority by giving us such erroneous particulars concerning Dickens's life.

My next complaint is directed against a new, privately printed, and limited edition of the correspondence of Dickens and Maria Beadnell published by the Bibliophile Society in 1929, which has only lately come before me. Here the same tendency as exists in the mis-statements in Mr. Eckel's book is observable, viz., to enhance the value of some Dickens correspondence privately printed in America.

The Beadnell letters were previously printed privately in a limited edition by the same society in 1908. In a new preface to the 1929 edition, Mr. H. H. Harper, who also wrote the preface in the earlier edition, with all the arts of a salesman (hardly necessary in a case where the copies of a book are distributed solely to the members of a Society), speaks with pride on the exclusiveness of the information he has to offer in the letters, and writes slightingly of those who in 1928 were " rather late in discovering " the facts of Dickens's early love. He goes on to say " In the winter of 1927-8 the New York ' Times ' gave prominent display lines to an important cablegram from London announcing that at a meeting of distinguished Dickensians there was tremendous excitement over the discovery of a sensational collection of holograph letters written by Dickens establishing beyond question the fact that the Dora of *David Copperfield* was drawn from life, and that she was an erstwhile sweetheart of the author. It was not stated, however, that these letters, which they had so lately discovered, are located in America, or that they were printed and copyrighted in England by the Bibliophile Society nearly twenty years before." He makes much of the cabled report that " one of the singular features of this discovery " was that Maria was " nineteen years older than himself," and that even the letters read at that meeting were wrongly quoted, instancing the sole example of the letter in which Dickens had written, " Our meetings of late . . . have never failed to prove a fertile source of wretchedness and misery . . . Thank God, I can claim for myself," etc. " According to the cabled report of the Dickensians' meeting," says Mr. Harper, " this passage was rendered ' Our meetings of late have never failed to prove a fertile source of wretchedness and misery—thank God ! ' The exclamation mark was thrown in gratuitously." All this on the strength of a " cabled report " from a press-man anxious to enlarge any mole-hill into a mountain, and without taking the trouble to verify the statements at the source, as the editors of this new edition were well able to do.

Now let us again examine the facts. Dickensians in London, whether " learned " or not, have not been ignorant of the existence of the Beadnell letters. Mr. J. Harrison Stonehouse (of whom more

anon), who sold the letters to the first American proprietor, Mr. Bixby, took a transcript of them before the sale, and more than one copy of the Bibliophile Society's publication of 1908 is in England. The late editor of this magazine possessed a copy sent him on publication ; this copy is now in the library of The Dickens House ; he wrote a long article on the subject in " The Strand Magazine " in 1922, quoting the letters very fully, and at the meeting in London in December, 1927, to which Mr. Harper refers, Major-General H. S. Neville White read several of the letters from the Bibliophile Society's book. They were never put forward as a new discovery, whatever may have been the impression of the representative of the New York " Times " in his anxiety to scent a " scoop." Certainly not one of the audience ever regarded Maria as nineteen years older than Charles, and " the exclamation mark " which calls for Mr. Harper's scathing comment was an utterance quite impossible to the lecturer.

And now for another point ! When we saw that a fresh edition of these letters had been issued we were hopeful that the Bibliophile Society would take the opportunity of correcting an injustice of twenty years standing ; but nothing has been done in that direction. We therefore take the opportunity of repeating here what the late B. W. Matz wrote in these pages in 1922 :

> " It is well known that Mr. Stonehouse was the author of the volume privately printed by the Bibliophile Society of Boston, U.S.A., entitled ' Charles Dickens and Maria Beadnell,' which for some reason best known to the Society, did not bear his name."

At a much earlier date, 18th March, 1911, the late Sir George Birdwood had made a similar protest in " The Athenæum " accompanied by a lengthy statement respecting Mr. Stonehouse's part in the volume.

We are pleased to see that in his book, " Green Leaves," published a short time ago, amplifying many of the discoveries he made twenty years ago, Mr. J. Harrison Stonehouse does not hesitate to proclaim himself on the title page as the " Author of ' Charles Dickens and Maria Beadnell.' Bibliophile Society."

The present publication of these letters adds nothing to the knowledge originally acquired by Mr. Stonehouse. We are, however, caused some amusement when we read that Dickens was a reporter in the House of Commons in 1830, when that very year, according to documentary evidence in this country (first brought to light by Mr. W. J. Carlton in 1926 in " Charles Dickens, Shorthand Writer "), the only " Commons " at which Dickens was a reporter was that called " Doctors." But perhaps this is one and the same to the Boston Bibliophile Society, and as the book is so very exclusive, they may, of course, have it just as they like. They may also like to believe that if you want to know what " the younger set " of 1830 looked like, you should refer to Du Maurier's Punch Cartoons ; such is another piece of information (oh, a great discovery this ! !) served up for their delight (and our amusement).

WALTER DEXTER.

VANISHED DICKENS'S LONDON

Sardinia Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields

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From a photograph by the late Walter Spiers

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ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

MR. HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL'S SPEECH TO THE IMMORTAL MEMORY AT THE BIRTHDAY DINNER

MR. HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL, President of The Dickens Fellowship, occupied the chair at the dinner held at the Trocadero Restaurant, Piccadilly, to celebrate the hundred and twenty-first anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens. There was a distinguished company of nearly three hundred guests, and after the toast of " The King " had been duly honoured, the Chairman gave the toast to the " Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens," which was drunk in silence.

As this year is the centenary of the first appearance of the work of Dickens " in all the glory of print," each guest was presented with a souvenir containing an exact reproduction of *A Dinner at Poplar Walk* as it appeared in " The Monthly Magazine " for December, 1833. After having expressed his regret at the unavoidable absence of the guest of the evening, Mr. Hugh Walpole, who had been ordered abroad for his health, Mr. Vachell said :

Our delightful souvenir to-night has furnished me with a theme. Look at it and put the clock back ; take a swallow's flight to the England of 1833, the England-that-was one century ago, when a young, ardent, highly-gifted man, hardly more than a boy, looked out upon the world as he saw it, and may even then, with the optimism which remained with him to the end, have sworn to himself that he would give undivided energies to making the world happier than he found it. It is a curious coincidence that to-day we are confronted with the same bewildering conditions which confronted him : the temporary triumph of the machine over man, the curse of unemployment, and the conflicting claims of Labour and Capital. One hundred years ago the Chartists—and few to-day will blame them—were attempting by violence to destroy the machines which later on gave to England her commercial supremacy. But, if we try to stand in the shoes of the youthful Charles Dickens, not forgetting the hardships and sufferings of his boyhood, we must admit that the outlook must have appeared dark indeed to him. When he was born, in 1812, more than a hundred offences were, by the law of the land, punishable by death. What to-day we turn from with abhorrence : such sports as bull-baiting, cock-fighting, hen-threshing, the stoning of dogs and Jews were our pastimes. Dickens was a child when the last witch was burnt alive in Ireland. Bribery and corruption were rampant. In our seaports press-gangs had established a reign of terror. In our mines children worked under atrocious conditions till they died. Nearly all our public offices were mal-administered. With rare exceptions the same could be said about our factories. Perhaps the most confounding fact about that time was the inordinate pride of

the privileged classes. No writer to-day can read without humiliation the lick-spittle dedications to the great, who accepted them as their right, a *droit de seigneur*. It is strange that Thackeray, so alive to the humours and inhibitions of the nobility, missed an opportunity to ridicule those who sincerely believed that it was a greater thing to inherit money than to earn it. Reading the memoirs and diaries of a hundred years ago it is obvious that the wastrels, nitwits and gamblers sneered at and derided the " cits " who replenished their purses, supplied heiresses to redeem the mortgaged family acres, and helped to turn that outstanding work of fiction, the Peerage, into the beerage. Dickens, when he gave us Harold Skimpole, had a glimpse of this opportunity ; but he, at that time, lacked intimate knowledge of the upper classes, the inalienable possession of his great rival.

Now, bearing in mind the social conditions which confronted Charles Dickens when he came of age, I submit that it is little short of a miracle that he wrote *The Pickwick Papers*. He must have been sorely tempted to dip his quill into tears rather than laughter ; and, had he done this, would the world of his day have wept with him ? I doubt it. The fly-blown *cliché*, " Weep and you weep alone," is true of all time : past, present and future. By the grace of God, so I believe, this young man wrote *The Pickwick Papers* instead of a *De Profundis*. And its instant colossal success must have revealed the undying truth grasped by Aristophanes four hundred years before Christ. You can laugh your fellow creatures out of sins and follies when preaching at them thunderously defeats its object. In *Nicholas Nickleby*, Dickens —whether he knew it then or not—established himself as the most popular preacher of his time, but his popularity was not due to his preaching. His treatment of the debtors' prison in *Pickwick* years before he wrote *Little Dorrit* must have enlightened him, if he needed enlightenment ; he must have realised that " manner " had with him a keener edge than " matter." Everybody had railed against the abuses, but Dickens indicated that such abuses were not merely wicked but stupid and ludicrous. He laughed them out of court. Nevertheless, laughter would not have served him without the underlying sympathy and humanity which has been the theme of nearly every speaker on him and his work, *plus* his passionate resentment against injustice and inhumanity however cunningly disguised.

It would be tiresome, almost an impertinence on my part, to recite to fellow Dickensians the innumerable abuses dealt with so masterfully in the novels. I would rather ask you to consider what Dickens would have done had he been alive now and at the zenith of his powers ? What would have been his message to us ? I refuse to believe it would have been other than a gospel of faith, hope and charity. I am sure that he would ridicule with his inimitable humour the false prophets who are bleating about the collapse of our civilisation ; he would urge us to fight, tooth and talon, against that Giant Despair which has gripped so many weaklings by the throat ; he might point out that if we no longer bait bears we are not justified in baiting bishops, and that we might with advantage revive pillory as a fitting punish-

ment for youthful pessimists seeking publicity. He would suggest, I think, that some of our writers, however technically brilliant they may be, are digging their graves with their pens, because they see life as a failure. Life has not failed ; they have ; they belong to the unburied dead, and some of them, so it seems to me, must have died before they were born. Literature is a tremendous thing, but as that great man and great scholar, the late Professor George Saintsbury, made plain, it is a much lesser thing than life. The immortality of Charles Dickens rests upon the written word, his novels, but that written word was inspired by his intense love of life. It is possible, now that novelists are hailed as critics, that he might be invited to write reviews in one of our leading papers. He would deal, I am sure, very whimsically with some of our so-called realists. Is it realism to portray nothing but the ugliest side of life, to pile agony upon agony, to exclude every ray of sunshine, and to present a world of inspissated gloom ? I read the other day a novel commended as realistic by some of our critics which, had I written it, I should have entitled " Weevils in the Wood." The book was well written ; it gripped me, but it lacked credibility. The best character was a midwife who brightened a few pages with her cosy chats about confinements.

Apropos, I recall a war story. A woman in humble circumstances, with her husband at the front, was bathing her baby when she heard a knock on the door below. She despatched the baby's little sister to fetch an expected letter. Hearing a crash she hastily left the baby in her chair, and darted downstairs to find the toddler had fallen from top stair to bottom, and had broken her neck. She snatched up the little body and returned to her room to find the baby drowned in the bath. The telegram on the mat below advised her a few minutes later that her husband had been killed in action. Forthwith she stuck her distracted head into the gas oven . . . !

The verdict at the Garrick Club was that, *qua* story, the yarn was either too terribly good to be true, or too terribly true to be good. Perhaps it might be described as realism running amok !

Since the death of Dickens, two of our national prides have been rolled in the dust : pride in rank and position is crumbling. A few years hence no one will ask : " Who is he ? " They will say : " What has he done ? " Pride in possessions is also passing, that pride so admirably delineated by John Galsworthy in his Forsyte Saga. His premature death has cast a shadow on us all. He might have been, he was asked to be, our Guest of Honour to-night. Well, what is left to us ? Are we to fall back upon pride in dispossession : the pride that preens itself upon its generosity with what belongs to others. It may be so.

Whatever Charles Dickens might have to say about present conditions, I feel certain that he would commend to us fervent charity, pointing out that the fervent means also " fermenting," not only a source of heat and light, but generating other qualities, especially the undying ferment of the spirit. He would indict after his own fashion —INDIFFERENCE, the slow inevitable cooling off of love, which is

death in life and death of life. Much of our boasted knowledge of to-day is puffed up, the knowledge which relies solely upon the test-tubes, the crucible and microscope, the knowledge, in fine, that is concerned with material things. The material abuses which Dickens fought so valiantly have passed away, but the spirit which sustained and fortified him lives and ferments. The Immortal Memory rests upon the novels, rests upon the love that informed them. You can find that love in its essential purity in the heart of a little child. You can find it, now and again, in the heart of a beautiful and serene old age. Between these extremes are its myriad manifestations, its actions and reactions, but—as it begins, so let it continue, because its purity and its selflessness are the acid test of its divinity.

Mr. Vachell was loudly cheered on resuming his seat.

Earlier in the evening he had given the guests an item of news, fresh to most of them.

"Long ago I wrote a Preface to *Edwin Drood*," said Mr. Vachell. "At that time I was not aware that John Forster, when preparing the manuscript for publication had (for reasons not stated in his 'Life of Dickens') restored to the text innumerable passages deleted by the author. Mr. John Watt, a fellow Dickensian, who is with us to-night, called upon me recently and showed me a script with all these passages interpolated by Forster cut out, a long labour of love and leisure.* But this is not all. Careful examination of this revised text has thrown fresh light on the problem of the murder. I am not going to forestall the surprise that awaits you. I can only say, speaking for myself, that I shall await the publication of *Edwin Drood* as apparently Dickens intended that it should be printed, with keenest interest and impatience."

The Toast of the Chairman was proposed by Mr. J. H. McNulty, who said that for many years they had known him and read his books, and the pleasant personality which they had found peeping out from the pages of those delightful novels had of recent years materialised into a very good friend and a very splendid President. There was a great tradition of noble speeches on the Immortal Memory of Dickens, and the Chairman that evening had maintained the procession as it ought to be maintained. It was a very happy subject, and the evidences of the immortality of Dickens's memory were very strong indeed.

With most of us, stories by Dickens were the first to be read after the fairy stories and the nursery rhymes, "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," and what the child reads the father and the mother read, too, and the grandfather and grandmother also. They do not all read it for the same reason. The child being able to play, likes all the pathetic parts; but the mother and father, the grandfather and grandmother, knowing that life is quite sad enough, choose all the human side. His characters are with us for ever. You may say

* We have not seen Mr. Watt's manuscript, but we presume these are in addition to similar discoveries made by Sir Robertson Nicoll in 1912 and published in his book "The Problem of Edwin Drood."—The Editor.

that they are exaggerated, that they are caricatured. It may be so. It would be truer to say that they are real men and women seen under the magnifying glass of genius.

It was a delight and an honour that a distinguised novelist should be the President of the association which takes name from the greatest of novelists. There was one character above all others in Mr. Vachell's books whom Dickens would have loved, and that is the old curio dealer, Mr. Quinney. Dickens would have envied him the creation of such a character. There was another book—"The Best of England." It might be the motto of our President. He has proved himself a true friend, a splendid president, a fine orator, and a great Dickensian.

The toast was drunk with musical honours.

During the evening messages of greetings were received from the branches at Boston, Brisbane, New York, Los Angeles, Montreal, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Bath, Sheffield and Woodville, and read by the Hon. Secretary, Mr. A. W. Edwards.

A programme of music, arranged by Mr. Frank Staff, brought another very successful Birthday Dinner to a close. The entertainers were: Miss Doreen Bristoll, Miss Ray Wallace, Mr. Leonard Henry, and Mr. Max Templeton. Orchestral items were rendered during the evening under the direction of Mr. E. Malshinger.

THE INFLUENCE OF DICKENS

COMPILED FROM RECENT BOOKS

By LOUIS B. FREWER, M.A.
(Bodleian Library)

"As the planters became more and more united in the defence of the slave system, they found the novels of Sir Walter Scott increasingly to their liking. . . . And if the planters derived inordinate satisfaction in reading . . . Scott, they exhibited a corresponding lack of interest in the more realistic and more democratic literary creations of Charles Dickens. Not until after the Civil War, when slavery was a thing of the past, did the works of Dickens attain their fullest measure of popularity in the region below the Potomac."—"Liberalism in the South," by V. Dabney. (Univ. of N. Carolina Press).

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VICTORIAN PHILISTIA.

Philistia in decline: "Now it was just about this time, 1870, that the first signs of change were beginning to be apparent. Five years before, a note of prophetic warning had been sounded. Charles Dickens had opened the last of his completed novels with a description of the newly rich Veneering household. This was something entirely new in Dickens. It was not that the Veneerings were odious, in the sense that Pecksniff had been odious, or Gradgrind, or the unconverted Scrooge. Even in his book, *Our Mutual Friend*, he does not put them in the pillory as he does Mr. Podsnap. He observes them and

senses their atmosphere as a startling and rather unpleasant phenomenon. His novels had been one great human comedy of middle-class life in the days of its glory. But when the curtain rises upon the Veneerings, we are watching the prologue to a tragedy. Matthew Arnold, who disliked the bourgeoisie, saw it only in the plenitude of its Philistine strength. Dickens, whose insight was born of love, published in the streets of Askelon the first premonitory news of its decline."

"To Dickens (the Colonies) represented that almost undiscovered country to which Mr. Micawber went and from which Abel Magwitch returned . . . (they) meant next to nothing.

"It had been the life-work of Dickens to compose a prose epic of English middle-class life. . . . Mr. Pickwick and his friends are a company of middle-class Philistines turned loose in the England of the thirties, and their adventures have held generations of readers spellbound; Nicholas Nickleby is an ordinary, respectable young fellow sent out into that world to seek his fortune, and he does not need even a plot to make his saga fit to rank, in all but music, with that of Odysseus."

"It is one of Mr. Chesterton's paradoxes that the glory of Dickens consisted in his having been unable to describe a gentleman. Sir Leicester Dedlock is proof to the contrary, and so even is Twemlow. But one feels that Dickens was never quite at home in upper-class society, and—what is more—that he would have thought no shame to have joined in the Radical chorus:

'I am no gentleman, not I,
No ! no ! no ! no !' "

—"Victorian Sunset," by E. Wingfield-Stratford. (Routledge).

* * * * *

BERNARD SHAW AGAIN.

". . . he would be a bold man who would declare that the literarily sexless Dickens was less virile than the literarily passionate Swinburne."

"Bernard Shaw will always be associated with Adelphi Terrace. . . . Beneath these arches played hide-and-seek Dickens and his boy friends after work was over at the blacking factory at Hungerford Market—happy augury !—as Shaw owes more perhaps to Dickens than to anyone."

"No one can read the running comment in his story ['Cashel Byron's Profession'] without seeing that to something of the Dickens faculty of humorous imagination he adds a much wider intellectual grasp than that of Dickens. . . ."

"Shaw is a singular composite of Barnum and Bunyan, of Butler and Blake, of Dickens and Jeremiah."

"In his boyhood Shaw was saturated with Dickens—but he never consciously imitated Dickens. Indeed, in Shaw's world of music, art and philosophy, Dickens was an 'ignoramus.' Moreover, clowning, in which Shaw is adept, is not peculiar to Dickens: it is deep in English literature. . . . In a forgotten little essay, 'On Dickens,' *The Dickensian* (1914), pp. 150-151, Shaw penetratingly observes: 'I am a Dickensian, if by a Dickensian you mean a person who read all Dickens eagerly in his nonage. I read a good deal of him in my childhood. . . . I was a good deal influenced by him.' "

". . . *Hard Times*, which Ruskin pronounced Dickens's best novel, is lucidly described by Shaw " [in the special preface which he wrote in 1913 for the Waverley edition of the book.]—" Bernard Shaw, Playboy and Prophet," by Archibald Henderson. (Appleton).

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JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

There are some of us who think that Chamberlain will, in English memories, fill a legendary niche in politics akin to that which has been assigned to Dickens in fiction. In the period dealt with by this volume (and, I am prepared at the proper time to maintain, throughout his career) Chamberlain appealed directly *to* the same class of Englishmen as Dickens and *for* the same classes. (How he extended that appeal we shall see later). Dickens pleaded with the middle class for the lower classes, speaking to them in their own language, and from their own outlook ; his great contemporary, Thackeray, did not know that language, and that outlook was closed to him. Chamberlain used the same language and stood, by training and breeding, at much the same viewpoint ; the Whigs, who controlled the political party with which he had to work, understood neither. Dickens aroused the consciences of middle-class Englishmen ; Chamberlain gave them by converting theory into practice large satisfaction. Indeed, it would be interesting to tabulate the abuses which Dickens exposed and see for the removal of how many of them Chamberlain was directly or indirectly responsible. To anyone who wishes to follow up this affinity, based upon a common, merely English ancestry, it is interesting to read some of Chamberlain's appeals, which in thought and style are very Dickens. Take one only, which Mr. Garvin says " left its mark upon the memory of Birmingham " :

" We bring up a population in the dank, filthy courts and alleys . . . we surround them with noxious influences of every kind, and place them under conditions in which the observance of even ordinary decency is impossible ; and what is the result ? . . . Their fault ! Yes, it is legally their fault, and when they steal we send them to gaol and when they commit murder we hang them. . . . It is no more the fault of these people that they are vicious and intemperate than it is their fault that they are stunted, deformed, debilitated and diseased."

Both were what Mr. Garvin calls—choosing a conventional label—Radicals, though many now would agree with Hartington when he tole the Queen, in 1885, that Chamberlain's ideas " almost amounted to Socialism," using the term loosely as Whigs used it then and many others use it to-day. But Chamberlain's added claim to legendary fame is that, as the man of action, he took a more practical means of saving the lower classes than mere appeals to the middle class ; he placed them in a position to save themselves by an extension of the franchise. When, in 1884, largely owing to Chamberlain's *intransigeance* within the Liberal Party, the electorate had been increased from 3,000,000 to 5,000,000 voters, he writes : " A revolution more important and more far-reaching than any previously accomplished in English history has been peacefully effected."

[Extract from Sir Fabian Ware's review of J. L. Garvin's " Life of Joseph Chamberlain " in the " Nineteenth Century and After," January, 1933.

DICKENS IN WASHINGTON

By LOUIS B. FREWER, M.A.

MORE by coincidence than through any constructive research on my part, I have discovered two interesting memoranda which throw a little light upon the American opinion of Dickens during the last years of his lifetime.

In a volume recently issued in Boston by the Houghton Mifflin Company entitled, "Portrait of an Independent: Moorfield Storey, 1845-1929," by M. A. de Wolfe Howe, we read:—

> "Tomorrow night I hear Dickens read *A Christmas Carol* and Trial scene . . . Mr. Stanton makes up the party, and it will be the only time that Mr. Dickens dines in Washington, so we three are the only people who will see him in that way in Washington. I will tell you how I like him when I write next. . . ."

This was contained in a letter from Storey to his sister Mariana, dated "Washington, February 2, 1868"; the "three" referred to were Charles Sumner, Edwin M. Stanton and Storey himself, who was the host's (Sumner's) secretary.

This dinner with Dickens was the subject of a double record; Storey was responsible for both—a memorandum which appeared in the "Atlantic Monthly" for April, 1930, and which was written the evening of the repast, immediately after the departure of the guests, and a letter to his father two days later. I have succeeded in obtaining a copy of this issue of that periodical; the memorandum began thus:—

"February 2.

"I have had a most delightful evening. I dined with Mr. Dickens, Mr. Sumner, and Mr. Stanton, as different types as can well be imagined. Mr. Dickens whose nature is emotional, sensitive, Mr. Sumner the man of intellect and principle, Mr. Stanton, the intensely energetic and practical.

"Mr. Sumner gave his account of the evening on which Mr. Lincoln was assassinated. . . .

"It was a very interesting evening.

"Dickens thought that Longfellow was the most highly thought-of American author abroad.

"He spoke of Louis Napoleon, whom he knew at Gore House as a young man, and thought that his imprisonment at Ham must have worked marvels, for he never thought him much of a man. Brougham characterized him as a damned fool. Dickens thought his only talent was his genius for silence."

The letter to his father, dated "Washington, February 4, 1868," reads as follows:—

". . . I wrote Mariana Sunday morning and told her of my proposed dinner that evening, and my anticipations which were great, were more than realized. It would be difficult to imagine a more pleasant way of meeting him. Mr. Sumner sat at the head of the table, Mr. Dickens on his right, Mr. Stanton on his left, and I sat opposite,

and the contrast between the three men was striking. I endeavored to print it as much as possible on my mind, for I felt if I should live fifty years longer my reminiscences might be valuable. I was not a little complimented by the invitation, and as it is the only time Mr. Dickens dines out in Washington, those who were there that night were the only ones who will meet him.

"Mr. Stanton came out wonderfully and Mr. Sumner said that he had never seen him so agreeable, and that I might meet him for a winter without getting anything but the very shortest replies from him. He is a great admirer of Dickens and is perfectly familiar with his works, so that he was very glad to meet him, and paid him a high compliment by telling him that he kept *Pickwick* at the head of his bed all through the war and never went to bed without reading in it. He said, when he was absolutely wearied out and his mind was harassed and anxious, that *Pickwick* was the only book that could relieve him, by inducing an entirely new chain of thought, and that it never failed. Mr. Dickens said that he had several copies in Russian sent him from the Crimea by officers who found them in the Russian camp, some of them stained with blood. These things must be very pleasant to him. Mr. Dickens was very cordial and pleasant, perfectly simple and natural. He talked of American authors, and said that Longfellow was the most thought of. He said that Longfellow himself struck him most delightfully when he got over here, and that he had never seen a finer character, more nearly what it ought to be. Then the conversation turned on European policies, and I got a very good idea of how matters look there, and then he talked of female authors, and put the author of 'Adam Bede' very high—I asked him whether he noticed the difference in his audiences in different cities which the papers noticed for him, and he laughed and said, 'Oh, no, that the papers made him say a great deal for him which he never thought of.'

"After dinner the conversation turned on the assassination, and Mr. Sumner and Mr. Stanton both gave their accounts of that night in Washington: how they heard the news and what passed in the room where Lincoln lay, and as Mr. Dickens had never heard it, they went into all the details, so that it was very interesting. Mr. Dickens sat back in his chair and listened, I thought with tears in his eyes at times, and remarked once in a while, 'God bless my soul.' When they got through he said, 'Well, those are the most interesting stories I have ever heard'—and they were indeed.

"Mr. Sumner, to wind up the evening after they had gone, sat and talked to me about his early visits to Europe, of Brougham, Thackeray, Count d'Orsay, Lady Blessington, etc., etc., till it was full time to go to bed.

"I was a good deal struck at table by the differences, as I compared the three men, each in his way historical. Stanton strikes me as a man of coarse mental fibre, not a man of sentiment or impressionable. There is something in his voice, thick and with a suspicion of the nose about it, a drawl at the end of words, that sounds unpleasantly. In fact he is not a refined or cultivated man, but he strikes you as a man of energy, and firmness, and perhaps the very dullness of his nervous organization enabled him to stand the tremendous wear and tear of the war, for after all it is the vibration rather more than the strain which snaps a string. Mr. Dickens opposite was just the reverse, a man of very sensitive

temperament, I should think, extremely nervous, quick in his motions and changing his expression like a flash. I stared at him well, and endeavored to see in his head the wonderful creations that have come out of it, but I am not enough of a Lavater to distinguish such things. Between them sat Mr. Sumner, the most thoroughbred of the three, an embodiment of an entirely different organisation. He is more refined than either, as firm in his will as Stanton, a much higher sort of character, but with much less of the practical talent which people call administrative ability. Of course, it is difficult to discriminate all these differences, but I felt them as I sat and looked at them. Quite an historic evening, I think, and one which I will remember.

"Last evening I went to hear him read, but the profligate who sold the tickets cheated me most outrageously. Instead of the seat in the middle of the hall which I was told I was buying, I found myself in the extreme corner, where with a draft percolating gently through my hair and clothes I sat on a window seat, and *heard* him read. I saw him as he stood at the desk, but I could not see his features at all distinctly and so lost all the play of expression. It was the same reading that you heard, and I enjoyed it very much, particularly the part where the Cratchits are mourning for the death of Tiny Tim, which was very touching. I should have been rather mad if I had not seen him the night before ; as it was I was reconciled.

"You may talk of the coldness of a Boston audience. It is positively tropical compared with the audience of last night. A few straggling claps saluted his entry, and one or two feeble efforts occurred from time to time, but there wasn't a single burst of genuine hearty applause. As he read about the Fezziwigs' party, a dog under my window set up an opposition which quite overcame Mr. Dickens, and he laughed so that he couldn't go on for a minute or two, and made several false starts in the effort. This was the thing that amused the audience most during the evening. The man behind me remarked at the end of the *Christmas Carol*, 'Well, there's a real good moral about that,' etc., etc.

"The political situation is improving. They say that Sherman is very mad because Stanton don't resign, and has communicated his feelings to Grant. Grant, too, is very mad at some attacks which have been made upon him in the 'Independent,' and, it is now said, will decline the Chicago nomination, for there, I believe, the convention will be held. I hope it is true, for both his sake and ours. New Hampshire, her senators think, is sure to go for us, but we shall see. A success in Alabama tomorrow will help us immensely. . . ."

WHO IS THIS?

(*Answers to Questions on page* 16)

1, Joe Gargery ; 2, Bailey Jr. ; 3, Mrs. Bardell ; 4, Rose Maylie ; 5, Mr. Jorkins ; 6, Chops ; 7, Drummle ; 8, Littimer ; 9, Nandy ; 10, Dr. Chillip ; 11, Mr. Sapsea ; 12, Fogg ; 13, Gaffer Hexam ; 14, Cornelia Blimber ; 15, Barnaby Rudge ; 16, Rigaud ; 17, Flamwell ; 18, Bradley Headstone ; 19, Mantalini ; 20, Waiter at Ipswich ; 21, Jack Bunsby ; 22, Major Chollop ; 23, Jonas Chuzzlewit ; 24, Ned Dennis ; 25, Bayham Badger ; 26, Merdle

MORE STREETS

In a rather ill-favoured and ill-savoured neighbourhood, though one of its rising grounds bears the name of Mount Pleasant, the Elfin Smallweed, christened Bartholomew, and known to the domestic hearth as Bart, passes that limited portion of his time on which the office and its contingencies have no claim. He dwells in a little narrow street, always solitary, shady, and sad, closely bricked in on all sides like a tomb, but where there yet lingers the stump of an old forest tree, whose flavour is about as fresh and natural as the Smallweed smack of youth.—*Bleak House.*

* * * * *

Pausing in the alleys behind the closed banks in Lombard Street, it gives one as good as a rich feeling to think of the broad counters with a rim along the edge made for telling money out on, the scales for weighing precious metals, the ponderous ledgers, and above all, the bright copper shovels for shovelling gold.—*The City of the Absent.*

* * * * *

Cadogan Place is the one slight bond that joins two great extremes ; it is the connecting link between the aristocratic pavements of Belgrave Square and the barbarism of Chelsea. It is in Sloane Street, but not of it. The people in Cadogan Place look down upon Sloane Street, and think Brompton low. They affect fashion too, and wonder where the New Road is. Not that they claim to be on precisely the same footing as the high folks of Belgrave Square and Grosvenor Place, but that they stand, with reference to them, rather in the light of those illegitimate children of the great who are content to boast of their connections, although their connections disavow them. *Nicholas Nickleby.*

* * * * *

Snow Hill ! What kind of a place can the quiet towns-people who see the words emblazoned in all the legibility of gilt letters and dark shading on the north-country coaches, take Snow Hill to be ?—*Nicholas Nickleby.*

* * * * *

Mews Street, Grosvenor Square, was not absolutely Grosvenor Square itself, but it was very near it. It was a hideous little street of dead wall, stables and dunghills, with lofts over coach houses inhabited by coachmen's families, who had a passion for drying clothes and decorating their window-sills with miniature turnpike-gates.—*Little Dorrit.*

* * * * *

Thavies Inn . . . a narrow street of high houses like an oblong cistern to hold the fog.—*Bleak House.*

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" I enter in this little book," he explained, " the names of the streets that I can't go down while the shops are open. This dinner to-day closes Long Acre. I bought a pair of boots in Great Queen Street last week, and made that no thoroughfare too. There's only one avenue to the Strand left open now, and I shall have to stop up that to-night with a pair of gloves. The roads are closing so fast in every direction that, in about a month's time, unless my aunt sends me a remittance, I shall have to go three or four miles out of town to get over the way." Dick Swiveller—*The Old Curiosity Shop.*

THE HUMOROUS CHARACTER OF DICKENS THAT INTERESTS ME MOST—AND WHY*

By E. W. BOROUGH

WHAT a task to set for a Dickensian! To pick out your favourite humorous character, when you like them all; and each one for a different characteristic! Where else in the literature of the world, save in Dickens's books, can you find such characters as Tony and Sam Weller, Mr. Micawber, Mr. Dick, Mr. Mantalini, Dick Swiveller, the Marchioness, Mr. Stiggins, Mr. Pickwick, Silas Wegg, Sim Tappertitt, Mark Tapley, and that immortal pair of ministering angels to suffering mankind, Betsey Prig and Sairey Gamp? And here one pauses, for with the mention of the doughty lady's name comes the realisation that Mrs. Gamp is the most humorous character that Dickens ever portrayed. Without her we would never have had the most amusing chapter Dickens ever wrote: Chapter 49 of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, entitled "In which Mrs. Harris assisted by a teapot is the cause of division between friends." Without Mrs. Gamp we should never have had that most mysterious and elusive character of Dickens. Mrs. Harris. We should not have enjoyed Mr. Mould, the undertaker, who describes himself and his establishment by his remark to Mrs. Gamp: "You may casually remark, in such a case, that we do the thing pleasantly and in a great variety of styles and are generally considered to make it as agreeable as possible to the feelings of the survivors. But don't obtrude it, don't obtrude it."

Mrs. Gamp herself is an unconscious humorist. She never appears anywhere in *Martin Chuzzlewit* that she does not leave in her wake a smile or a hearty laugh. She is deadly serious and therein lies her humour. If consistency is a jewel, Mrs. Gamp must be bedecked with invisible brilliants. From the time she first appears on Mr. Pecksniff's behest as a nurse of old Chuffy, to the end, she never neglects an opportunity to tell what a good nurse she is, how cheaply her services may be obtained and how faithful are her ministrations. She is a bibulous old hypocrite who has told of her invaluable services so many times that she really believes in herself.

The humour of Mrs. Gamp's character is enhanced in that she rarely makes statements of her virtues except as quoting the mysterious Mrs. Harris. Dickens, as we all know, described his characters in great detail, but the artfulness of Mrs. Gamp was too much, even for

* This was the subject of an Essay Competition held by the New York Branch in October last. The prize was awarded to Mr. Borough for this essay.

him. We never have a description of Mrs. Harris; the nearest we learn of her is during Mrs. Gamp's visit to Mr. Mould. Sairey is making one of her speeches through the medium of Mrs. Harris:

> "I ast your pardon, ma'am, says Mrs. Harris, and I humbly grant your grace, for if ever a woman lived as would see her feller creeters into fits to serve her friends, well do I know that woman's name is Gamp."

Here Dickens takes up the narrative with the nearest description we get of Mrs. Harris:

> "At this point she (Mrs. Gamp) was fain to stop for breath; and advantage may be taken of the circumstance, to state that a fearful mystery surrounded this lady by the name of Harris, whom no one in the circle of Mrs. Gamp's acquaintance had ever seen; neither did any human being know her place of residence, though Mrs. Gamp appeared on her own showing to be in constant communication with her. There were conflicting rumours on the subject; but the prevalent opinion was that she was a phantom of Mrs. Gamp's brain—as Messrs. Doe and Roe are fictions of the law—created for the express purpose of holding visionary dialogues with her on all manner of subjects and invariably winding up with a compliment to the excellence of her nature."

The description of Sairey's abode, her signboard, and her personal appearance when she first makes her entrance into the affairs of the Chuzzlewit family are such that, having passed off the scene, her reappearance is eagerly awaited.

> "This lady lodged at the bird fanciers, next door but one to the celebrated mutton-pie shop and directly opposite the original cats'-meat-warehouse, the renown of which establishments was duly heralded on their respective fronts. It was a little house and this was the more convenient for Mrs. Gamp, being in her highest walk of art a monthly nurse or as her sign-board boldly had it midwife," and lodging in the first floor front was easily assailable at night by pebbles, walking sticks and fragments of tobacco pipes, all much more efficacious than the street door knocker which was so constructed to wake the street with ease and even spread alarms of fire in Holborn without making the slightest impression on the premises to which it was addressed."

Mrs. Gamp's personal appearance, being somewhat at variance with Mrs. Harris's high estimate of Sairey's excellence of character and sobriety, lends another very amusing aspect to this famous woman.

> "She was a fat old woman, this Mrs. Gamp, with a husky voice and a moist eye, which she had a remarkable power of turning up and only showing the white of it. Having very little neck it cost her some trouble to look over herself, if one may say so, at those to whom she talked. She wore a very rusty black gown, rather the worse for snuff, and a shawl and bonnet to correspond. The face of Mrs. Gamp, the nose in particular, was somewhat red and swollen, and it was difficult to enjoy her society without becoming conscious

of a smell of spirits. Like most persons who have attained great eminence in their profession, she took to hers very kindly, insomuch that setting aside her natural predilections as a woman she went to a lying-in or a laying-out with equal zest and relish."

It is when we have both the picture of Mrs. Gamp's appearance and a knowledge of the workings of her mind that we enjoy Sairey and can appreciate her unintentional wit. No matter whom she meets or what the occasion, she always has an eye to business. She never loses an opportunity to have Mrs. Harris tell of her character, her devotion or the justice of her charges. Her idea of carrying the business card of Mr. Mould, the undertaker, in her bag when called into nursing a desperate case is macabre but delightful. Her giving to Jonas Chuzzlewit's bride "a printed card whereon was an inscription copied from her signboard, with one eye on the future, one on the bride and an arch expression in her face, partly spiritual, partly spirituous and wholly professional, and peculiar to her art," is another example of humorous writing that I think is difficult to parallel. Mrs. Gamp called herself a "midwife," but such was her verbal zeal in lauding herself through Mrs. Harris, one would be inclined to think of her as an "oral" nurse. The humour of her speech was not alone in her quotations of Mrs. Harris. Under stress her remarks are equally amusing. It was during—in fact, almost at the close of—the famous tea-party, the description of which to my mind Dickens never exceeded for humour in any of his other works that Mrs. Gamp speaks with emphasis.

Mrs. Prig, during the session with that excellent teapot that brewed gin instead of tea developed apparently an abstracted manner of recourse to the teapot without regard to her hostess, and Sairey, driven to distraction, finally grabs her hand and gives vent to that famous expression: "No, Betsey! Drink fair wotever you do."

If Sairey had never made any other observation in her whole career, to me that remark would suffice to make her famous. Like so many of Dickens's sayings, just as is applicable now as it was in his own times.

Another speech of hers at the end of the party when Sairey tells Poll Sweedlepipe of Mrs. Prig's behaviour and particularly of the scandalous remarks about Mrs. Harris, is also an unforgettable one.

"But the words she spoke of Mrs. Harris, lambs could not forgive. No, Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp with a burst of feeling, "nor worms forget."

Throughout the whole book Mrs. Gamp is described by Dickens in a serious manner that is most delightful and lends much more humour to her portrayal than if he had told in so many words just what an old "Branigan" she was. Finally, at the end, one is pleased to find their estimate of her character and conduct, which Sairey believes she has so carefully cloaked in the words of Mrs. Harris, verified by old Martin Chuzzlewit, speaking to Mr. Sweedlepipe:—

"Mr. Sweedlepipe, take as much care of your lady lodger as you

can and give her a word or two of good advice now and then. Such," said old Martin looking gravely at the astonished Mrs. Gamp, "as hinting at the expediency of a little less liquor and a little more humanity, and a little less regard for herself and a little more regards for her patients, and perhaps a trifle of additional honesty."

This summation is the conclusion we all arrive at when describing Sairey to anyone so unfortunate as not to have made her acquaintance. But none of us would care to change Sairey one iota or deprive Mrs. Harris of her chance to testify, for to do so would ruin the delineation of one of the world's truly humorous characters.

THE CHANGING FACE OF LONDON*

IT is always a consolation to us that in spite of the great changes constantly taking place, there are still over one hundred places to be seen in London that had some or other association with Dickens; and we know, too, most of the sites of the departed landmarks. All these places Mr. Clunn recalls most pleasantly and vividly in his truly wonderful volume of over five hundred large well-filled pages, supplemented by a couple of hundred specially selected prints and photographs to show us the identical spots then and now during the past century. And all this for the truly ridiculous and essentially Dickensian sum of three half-crowns ! ! There is hardly a lover of London who will be able to resist it, and there is surely not a single Dickensian who will willingly go without it. It is the monster bargain book of London, and chock full of Dickensian flavours. What makes this book so intensely human, and all the more appealing to us on that account, is that by the introduction of the modern building Mr. Clunn makes us feel as much at home with the present-day London as Dickens did with the city that is passing. He proves himself to be the happiest of guides to the changes in the endearing and enduring face of London. Conveniently with this big book on that which passeth, comes a welcome little book† (at the price of a nimble sixpence) on that which never fadeth, the good old George Inn in the Borough. The writer of it is our old friend, Mr. William Kent. The late B. W. Matz's pamphlet has so long been out of print that Mr. Kent's interesting and freshly-written, well-illustrated history of this old hostelry will be doubly welcome. Copies can be obtained, post free, from the Dickens House for sevenpence.

"THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE," DECEMBER, 1833.

If any reader knows of a copy of the above, will he kindly communicate with me, as I am desirous of reproducing the cover of the part in the December number of *The Dickensian*.—THE EDITOR.

*"The Face Of London," by Harold P. Clunn. Illustrated. 7s. 6d. Simpkin, Marshall, Ltd.

†"The George Inn, Southwark," by William Kent. Illustrated. 6d. Kent and Matthews, Ltd.

MISPLACED ADMIRATION

By Rev. T. C. SIMPSON

LET none imagine from my title that I am going to suggest that admiration for Dickens is misplaced. A thousand times no! I have a most fervent love and admiration for the great writer who brought, and who is still bringing, gaiety and happiness into thousands of homes, and who entered, perhaps more than any other man living or dead, into the lives and cares and troubles and joys of his fellow creatures.

But I do think that many of us are so often carried away by the fascination which Dickens throws over his characters that we give unstinting and undiscriminating admiration to some persons who really do not deserve it. There are many such characters: first, I will instance that breezy, cheery, optimistic, pessimistic man, Mr. Wilkins Micawber. What a glamour Dickens throws upon him! Who doesn't love him, laugh at him, rejoice with him, weep with him? And when, his soul bursting with righteous indignation, he devotes himself to the task of exposing the villainy of Uriah Heep, in which task he finally achieves success, our admiration knows no bounds.

And yet, is he worthy of it?

There was certainly at least one great flaw in the character of Wilkins Micawber. It is that he was not strictly honest. Also that he sinned against the Light; that is to say, he knew perfectly well the right course to take; more than that, he preached about it, but like so many other preachers (myself no doubt among the number) he didn't practise what he preached.

Look at him in Chapter xi, when David goes to visit him in the King's Bench Prison, to which he had been carried for debt. Mr. Micawber, after giving him the world-famous piece of advice, borrowed a shilling from him for porter and gave him a written order on Mrs. Micawber for the amount; then put away his pocket handkerchief and cheered up. How *could* he do it! Poor little loyal-hearted David, stunned into almost insupportable grief by the hard, relentless and undeserved fate which had torn him from his home, his friends and his schoolfellows, with wages of 6s. a week, out of which he had to feed and clothe himself. A shilling to him must have seemed an enormous sum, and Micawber lightly borrows it, and gives him a written order on Mrs. Micawber for the amount. Where in the world was she, poor soul, to get it? Did he ever pay it back? I don't think so. He was certainly not over-scrupulous in paying his debts, and I doubt if he ever thought of the matter again. No doubt Mrs. Micawber, who was most motherly and good in her dealings with David, saw that by some means or other he didn't lose the shilling, but I am convinced Micawber himself didn't trouble about it. He had need of a shilling to provide a present and altogether unnecessary gratification, and he took advantage of little David's innocence and pity to get it.

That was his fault, talking beautifully about paying one's way, and then launching out into expense for immediate luxuries, and

borrowing, borrowing, borrowing without the slightest possibility of being able to repay.

Look at him in Chapter XVII. He goes to Plymouth to be, as he says, " on the spot." But talent was not wanted in the Custom House, and Mrs. Micawber's family was " decidedly cool." To quote Mrs. Micawber, " Under such circumstances what could a man of Mr. Micawber's spirit do ? But one obvious course was left. To *borrow* of that branch of my family the money to return to London and to return at any sacrifice ! "

Presently, we read, Mr. Micawber returned. " He said, shaking hands with me, ' Copperfield, you are a true friend ; but when the worst comes to the worst, no man is without a friend, who is possessed of shaving materials.' At this dreadful hint, Mrs. Micawber threw her arms around Mr. Micawber's neck, and entreated him to be calm. He wept, but so far recovered almost immediately, as to ring the bell for the waiter, and to bespeak a hot kidney pudding and a plate of shrimps for breakfast in the morning."

Another glimpse of Mr. Micawber in Chapter XXVIII. David is talking to his old schoolfellow, Traddles. " ' Traddles,' said I, ' Mr. Micawber don't mean any harm, poor fellow ; but if I were you, I wouldn't lend him anything.' ' My dear Copperfield,' returned Traddles, smiling, ' I haven't got anything to lend.' ' You've got a name, you know,' said I. ' Oh, you call *that* something to lend ? ' returned Traddles with a thoughtful look. ' Certainly.' ' Oh,' said Traddles. ' Yes, to be sure ! I am very much obliged to you, Copperfield ; but I am afraid I have lent him that already.' " Then to satisfy his debt to Traddles, what did Mr. Micawber do ? He gave him an IOU, blandly saying, " I am happy to recover my moral dignity, and to know that I can once more walk erect before my fellow men." At this juncture David remarks : " I am persuaded that this was quite the same to Mr. Micawber as paying the money." Do you think so, fellow Dickensians ? I most emphatically do not, and I am sorry to say that in spite of his many excellent and delightful points I must write Mr. Micawber down as dishonest.

I will now leave him and turn to the second of the characters I have chosen as being unduly admired, Mr. Richard Swiveller. It is hard to have to judge such a friendly, swaggering, light-headed, warm-hearted, sociable fellow ; but the truth must be told. Here there is no room whatever for question. Dick Swiveller was a drunkard. Listen to his very first appearance in the pages of *The Old Curiosity Shop*. It is in Chapter II. " At length there sauntered up, on the opposite side of the way, with a bad pretence of passing by accident, a figure conspicuous for its dirty smartness, which after a great many frowns and jerks of the head, in resistance of the invitation, ultimately crossed the road and was brought into the shop. ' There, it's Dick Swiveller,' said the young fellow, pushing him in. ' Sit down, Swiveller.' ' But is the old min agreeable ? ' said Mr. Swiveller in an undertone. ' Sit down,' repeated his companion. Mr. Swiveller complied, and looking about him with a propitiatory smile . . . took

occasion to apologize for any negligence that might be perceptible in his dress, on the ground that last night he had had the sun very strong in his eyes; by which expression he was understood to convey to his hearers, in the most delicate manner possible, the information that he had been extremely drunk."

But I have another charge against Dick Swiveller. He was faithless and inconstant in love. As far as it was possible for a man of his habits to be in love, he was in love with Sophy Wackles. And yet, the very first time his so-called friend, Fred Trent, tempted him with the bait of his sister, Little Nell, whom he presumed to be a great heiress, Dick fell. See Chapter VII. "It would be tedious," we read, "to pursue the conversation through all its artificial windings, or to develop the gradual approaches by which the heart of Richard Swiveller was gained. It is sufficient to know that vanity, interest, poverty, and every spendthrift consideration urged him to look upon the proposal (*i.e.* that he should marry Little Nell) with favour, and that where all other inducements were wanting, the habitual carelessness of his disposition stepped in and still weighed down the scale on the same side." And so, poor Sophy Wackles is forsaken, though for some time Dick is in a maudlin state, regret at giving up the girl of his heart being alternated with indignation at Mr. Cheggs, the market gardener, who married her.

There is still another reason why admiration for Dick Swiveller is misplaced. He was dishonest. I don't mean to say he would have stolen. He wasn't a thief in that sense. But he hadn't the smallest scruple about cheating tradesmen.

Listen to this in Chapter VIII. "Business disposed of, Mr. Swiveller was inwardly reminded of its being nigh dinner time, and to the intent that his health might not be endangered by long abstinence, dispatched a message to the nearest eating house, requiring an immediate supply of boiled beef and greens for two. With this demand, however, the eating house (having experience of its customer) declined to comply, churlishly sending back for answer that if Mr. Swiveller stood in need of beef, perhaps he would be so obliging as to come there and eat it, bringing with him, as grace before meat, the amount of a certain small account which had been long outstanding. Not at all intimidated by this rebuff, but rather sharpened in wits and appetite, Mr. Swiveller forwarded the same message to another and more distant eating house, adding to it, by way of rider, that the gentleman was induced to send so far, not only by the great fame and popularity its beef had acquired, but in consequence of the extreme toughness of the beef retailed at the obdurate cook's shop, which rendered it quite unfit not merely for gentlemanly food, but for any human consumption. The meal was sent and eaten and enjoyed. 'May the present moment,' said Dick Swiveller, sticking his fork into a large, carbuncular potato, 'be the worst of our lives . . . Ah! Man wants but little here below, nor wants that little long! How true that is—after dinner.' 'I hope the eating-house keeper will want but little, and that he may not want that little long,' returned his companion, 'but I suspect you

have no means of paying for this.' 'I shall be passing presently and I'll call,' said Dick, winking his eye significantly. 'The waiter's quite helpless. The goods are gone, and there's an end of it.'" Afterwards, when the indignant waiter asked at what time the gentleman would call, in order that, being personally responsible, he might take care to be in the way at the time, " Mr. Swiveller, after mentally calculating his engagements to a nicety, replied that he should look in at from two minutes before six to seven minutes past; and the man disappearing with this feeble consolation, Richard Swiveller took a greasy memorandum book from his pocket, and made an entry therein. 'Is that a reminder in case you should forget to call?' asked Trent with a sneer. 'Not exactly, Fred,' replied the imperturbable Richard, continuing to write with a businesslike air, 'I enter in this little book the names of the streets I can't go down while the shops are open. This dinner to-day closes Long Acre. I bought a pair of boots in Great Queen Street last week, and made that no thoroughfare, too. There's only one avenue to the Strand left open now, and I shall have to stop that up to-night with a pair of gloves. The roads are closing so fast in every direction that in about a month's time, unless my aunt sends me a remittance, I shall have to go three or four miles out of town to get over the way.'" That, I think, clinches my argument that upon the score of dishonesty Dick Swiveller is unworthy of our admiration.

But I have still one last charge against him. He deliberately deceived his benefactors. Dick had an aunt from whom he hoped to receive a remittance. "There's no fear of her failing in the end?" asked Trent. "Why, I hope not," returned Mr. Swiveller, "but the average number of letters it takes to soften her is six, and this time we have got to eight without any effect at all. I'll write another to-morrow morning. I mean to blot it a good deal, and shake some water over it out of the pepper caster, to make it look penitent. 'I'm in such a state of mind that I hardly know what I write'—blot. 'If you could see me at this moment shedding tears for my past misconduct' —pepper caster—'my hand trembles when I think'—blot again—if that don't produce the effect, it's all over."

But enough. I have surely quoted sufficient evidence of Dick Swiveller's bad traits to shatter the admiration we have felt for him.

And now my third and last character is a woman. Her name is Sairey Gamp. Ever since Dickens wrote *Martin Chuzzlewit* she has been idolized and quoted and petted. And yet, when we come to read about her, what a perfect horror she is; a nasty, dirty, smelly, snuffy, greasy, gin-sodden creature of repulsive habits. She ill-treats her patients and neglects them. She fawns upon possible employers. She invents a friend—Mrs. Harris—for the sole purpose of quoting her spurious tributes to her moderate charges, her wonderful soberness and her other virtues. She disgusts and repels us at every turn. And yet by the magic of his pen, Dickens, without in the least hiding her iniquities, makes her into one of his most fascinating figures, and from his time all generations have looked upon her as blessed.

Just one last word. It is a confession. I have pointed out the bad traits in the characters of three Dickens persons. But in spite of all I have said, I love them all, I admire them all, and I would not have any one of them in any way different.

A POET ON THE POETRY IN DICKENS

THE Lecture of Mr. Alfred Noyes on "The Poetry in Dickens" which took place on January 16th was an event which will linger long in the memories of all those who had the pleasure of hearing it. The lecturer began by reciting his own poem describing the child Dickens finding and reading the books which opened to him the fairy-land of literature, stirred his youthful imagination and had such a lasting influence on him. It is a beautiful poem and made a charming prelude to the lecture.

The chief method of science, said Mr. Noyes, is analysis, that of poetry synthesis. The face of a dear friend, a mother or sister is, under the scientist's analysis, simply an immense number of electrons whirling round like a diminutive solar system. This may be perfectly true; but something far more vital and real is lost, the look of love and affection and the loss far outweighs the gain. As an example of the opposite method, that of poetry, he quoted a description of a bedroom at The Dragon, from *Martin Chuzzlewit*, where each word and phrase helps to build up the perfect picture and suggest sleep.

"It was none of your frivolous, preposterously bright bedrooms where nobody can close an eye with any kind of propriety or decent regard to the association of ideas; but it was a good, dull, leaden, drowsy place, where every article of furniture reminded you that you came there to sleep, and that you were expected to go to sleep. There was no wakeful reflection of the fire there, as in your modern chambers, which upon the darkest nights have a watchful consciousness of French polish; the old Spanish mahogany winked at it now and then, as a dozing cat or dog might, nothing more. The very size and shape and hopeless immovability of the bedstead and wardrobe, and in a minor degree of even the chairs and tables, provoked sleep; they were plainly apoplectic and disposed to snore." This, he said, is the same method as that used by Keats in his "Ode to a Nightingale."

Mr. Noyes then quoted other passages from *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *The Haunted Man*, and read a long extract from the description of the death of little Paul Dombey. Thackeray, who was a great man, said this death scene was "stupendous," the little critics of to-day call it "sickly." Finally he came to the death of Sydney Carton. The most beautiful lines of the poets are out of place at the graveside, and here Dickens chooses the greatest words in existence, the words of One who was not merely man; "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

Deep appreciation of the lecture was expressed by the audience, and complying with a request made by a lady, Mr. Noyes recited another poem and a memorable evening came to a close.

J. H. McN.

Drawn by] [*Ruth Whittaker*

DINING WITH DICKENS

In a delightful essay entitled "Dining with Dickens," which is one of the several excellent features of the Winter Number, Mrs. Laurie Thorpe observes: "Dickens rarely or never applies disparaging adjectives in describing food; he simply omits the adjective altogether if it is not eulogistic."

This remark is generally true, yet it should be noted that in a few instances Dickens did enter into detail when giving an account of meals ill-cooked or badly served, and the description of these unsuccessful repasts makes equally good reading with that of his most appetising breakfasts or tasty little suppers.

All Dickensians will call to mind Martin Chuzzlewit's first introduction to an American dinner-table when, before the gluttonous onslaught of Mrs. Pawkins's boarders, "great heaps of indigestible matter melted away as ice before the sun"; or Tommy Traddles's unfortunate experience of Dora's house-keeping, when he was treated to unopened oysters, underdone mutton and tea the quality of which the tender-hearted Doady could not find it in his heart to question.

But, for the most admirable description that was ever penned of bad food and wretched service, we have that immortal "Little Dinner in an Hour," which the Uncommercial Traveller partook of in the company of his friend Bullfinch at the dear old "Temeraire."

A. DE SUZANNET.

The writer of "Dining with Dickens" omits a meal which is a great favourite of mine: the chilly luncheon on the occasion of Paul Dombey's Christening—"looking more like a dead dinner lying in state than a social refreshment."

"'What have you got there, Mr. John?'

"'I have got a cold fillet of veal here, Sir,' replied Mr. Chick rubbing his numbed hands hard together, 'what have *you* got there, Sir?'

"'This,' returned Mr. Dombey, 'is some cold preparation of calf's head, I think. I see cold fowls—ham—patties—salad—lobster.' There was a toothache in everything."

MONTAGUE HARDEY.

ART AND HEART

I am not anxious to enter the controversy about Dickens's "lack of art," but Mr. W. Kent has butted in, and, of course, he has adopted the usual Hyde Park methods. "Let me quote Gissing," he says, and proceeds to do so to the extent of fifteen lines, and your readers

who have not read the book from which the extract is taken are left under the impression that Gissing more or less condemns Dickens for the theatricality of his last chapters. Even in this extract though, it will be noted that Gissing says "It is magnificent; the brilliant triumph of stage tradition." Now *I* want to quote Gissing. Please listen, Mr. Kent, though you know the passage perfectly well.

> "Ah, those final chapters of Dickens! How eagerly they are read by the young, and with what a pleasant smile by elders *who prize the good things of literature*! No one is forgotten, and many an unsuspected bit of happiness calls aloud for gratitude to the author."

The italics are mine.

Gissing then refers to the case of Mr. Mell, the usher at Creakle's School in *David Copperfield*, and he says:

> "Who would prefer to learn the cold fact; that Mell, the rejected usher, sank from stage to stage of wretchedness and died—uncertain which—in the street or the workhouse?"

And thus does Gissing continue:

> "It was not by computing the density of the common brain, by gauging the force of vulgar prejudice, that Charles Dickens rose to his supreme popularity . . . Who can more rightly be called an artist than he who gave form and substance to the ideal of goodness and purity, of honour, justice, mercy, whereby the dim multitudes falteringly seek to direct their steps? This was his task in life, to embody the better dreams of ordinary men; to fix them as bright realities, for weary eyes to look upon. He achieved it in the strength of a faultless sympathy; following the true instincts which it is so unjust—so unintelligent—to interpret as mere commercial shrewdness or dullness of artistic perception. Art is not single; to every great man his province, his mode.

I beg to suggest that *heart* is rather more important than *art*, even though Mr. Kent may spell the latter word with a capital A, but I am not going to say more than that in this controversy. My purpose in writing is solely to call attention to Mr. Kent's controversial methods.

J. W. T. Ley.

DICKENS AND THE MODERNS

Few authors have influenced a country's literature as Dickens, and very often, while reading some modern English book, I have been struck by something so very Dickensian about it that I have wondered if the author might be a Dickens lover. In most cases it has been so. Would it not be of general interest to find these English or foreign writers, make a list of them, giving particulars as to their connection with Dickens? It would be interesting to find out which of Dickens' books has had more influence in their literary work.

I believe most of the important modern writers could be numbered amongst them such as Hardy, Wells, Galsworthy, and others.

A Uruguayan Dickensian.

[The pronouncements upon Dickens by various modern writers (several of whom are numbered among the Past and Vice-Presidents

of the Fellowship) are given from time to time in these pages. We are at all times pleased to receive details of any references to Dickens made by modern authors.—EDITOR.]

DROODANA

The article by Mr. John Y. Watt has greatly intrigued me. I have read it several times, and my curiosity remains unsatisfied. I am puzzled almost beyond measure as to what it is all about. I am wondering if it is proposed to publish a series of articles along similar lines. Number 2 in the series might comprise extracts from the Suffolk papers of the period, Number 3 could deal in similar fashion with Middlesex papers, and so on—and then, like the round-eyed child in the egg-box that Dickens saw at Edinburgh and so pathetically described in one of his speeches, I should still be "wondering what it was a' aboot."

Mr. Watt gives in detail items of news which appeared in Kentish papers in 1840, 1842, and 1843. Why not 1841 as well I do not understand. These are given with almost no comment, but we are bound to assume that they are supposed to have some import. What that import is, however, I cannot guess. I cannot imagine that we are expected to believe that in 1840 Dickens was reading these comparatively obscure Kentish papers microscopically and making notes thereon for possible use in a book to be written thirty years later. Of course, it is true that he had lived in Kent in early childhood, and always retained a sentiment for Rochester and the district around, but he left there very early, and I cannot believe that he had a close interest between 1820 and 1858 in all the details of the local parish-pump history. We have an equal right to assume that he had a similar interest in the local happenings of Hampshire.

We read of vagrants sent to the treadmill, and to the House of Correction. There is quite good reason for believing that Mr. Watt could find exactly similar records in any London paper of the period. If I am asked to believe that Dickens got such material from Kentish papers I positively refuse to do anything of the sort. To me it is ridiculous to suggest that he was so circumscribed in his contact with the world around him.

Then look at that item dated January 18th, 1842—"Forthcoming christening of the Prince of Wales. 'Joy will abound in every quarter of the city.'" What on earth was there peculiar to Rochester in that, and what in the name of heaven is its Dickensian import? On June 7th in that same year there were two grand concerts in Rochester. Wonderful information for Dickensian scholiasts and annotators! Is it not amazing that so conscientious a researcher as Robert Langton should have missed this portentous piece of information? What a wonderful light it throws on every book Dickens wrote! "Black Eyed Susan" was played at Rochester in June, 1842. Epoch-marking discovery! The schools of the city reopened on July 18th. No doubt that piece of news gave Dickens the idea of Bradley Headstone and Charley Hexam! I expect Dickens noted this remarkable happening in his note book, and coming across it in 1863, said, "Eureka! That gives me an idea. I'll introduce a schoolmaster into my new book!"

There is a reference to a lecture on mesmerism. I can only say that if this is supposed to have anything to do with Dickens's interest in

the subject the idea is absurd. He was keenly interested some time before this date, and had practised the art on many of his friends. If the item is supposed to have anything to do with the character of Jasper, my comment is Scrooge's "Bah! Humbug!" One extract dated January 17th, 1843, is described as "An item in which Dickens would have revelled." How impressive! I'll undertake to find items galore in which Dickens would have revelled in any paper of 1843, 1883, 1903, or 1933.

Honestly, all this sort of thing seems to me to be utterly futile. I do suggest that some of our Dickensians really ought to try to get hold of the greatest fact of all about their hero, namely, that he was the greatest humorist of his time.

CHARLES WHITCOMB.

THE FATE OF TINY TIM

Regarding the entertaining correspondence between Mr. Cuming Walters and Mr. Warren *re* "and to Tiny Tim, who did NOT die," etc., it would be interesting to find out when, and why, Dickens added these words—they do not appear in the original MS.

Everyone, who hears the *Carol* recited, will agree that these words, spoken quietly, and with a slight emphasis on the "NOT," let us say "in italics," as Mr. Warren ingeniously suggests, are most effective, therefore not "unnecessary"!

I suggest Dickens carefully added these words after "reading" the *Carol* to his friends—possibly to justify his words in Stave III when Scrooge asks "tell me if Tiny Tim will live," and begs "he will be spared," and further, "Scrooge had his eye upon them, and especially on Tiny Tim, until the last." Surely it would have been bad art not to have disclosed the fate of Tiny Tim?

It may be good art to disguise one's meaning in writing, speaking or painting, leaving in one's mind doubt, confusion or dissatisfaction, but most of your readers, I think, will thank Mr. Warren for his genial interpretation that "to touch innumerable hearts" is art.

May I also point out that the "NOT" is not such a "mundane slab of prose in heavy type," *in the book itself.*

The German critic Dibelius writes:—

> "That Tiny Tim—doomed to death—does not die, would in the case of *The Old Curiosity Shop* have been a side-slip, but here, in this realistic fairy story, pulsates the natural optimism of the author and carries his readers with him; who can help rejoicing?"

I therefore venture to suggest that few will feel that the "beauty of the Tiny Tim conception is marred" by these words, whilst a comparison with the "May Queen" seems irrelevant, with twenty-seven verses referring to her death (and few would wish her to live), whilst millions who love Tiny Tim welcome these thirteen illuminating words.

FRANK S. JOHNSON.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER

The Rev. Mr. Simpson in his article on Page 147 does not, in my opinion, exercise a very keen discrimination in regard to Dickens's development of the characters of Micawber and Dick Swiveller.

He justly dubs the one as dishonest, and the other as a drunkard. And so they were, when first introduced to us. But must it be that they can never reform ? If studied carefully, can it not be seen that, from their first appearance, the author endows each of these characters with a subtle something that indicates the possibility of better things ? He makes them lovable in spite of their failings, and so leads us to expect the improvement which eventually takes place. In Micawber's case, the poor chap is driven by sheer necessity to use various shady tricks to raise money, most of which is utilised for the benefit of his wife and family as well as himself. He never gets a chance till Miss Trotwood gives him one. And then who could work more loyally and strenuously than he does in the unmasking of Uriah Heep, the task he was commissioned to undertake ? What more natural than that Miss Trotwood, with her fortune restored by his efforts, should pay the passages of himself and his family to Australia, and that he should "make good" out there !

Then we have Dick Swiveller, little more than a boy, mixed up with a set of raffish, dissipated fellows and carried away by the spurious glory of becoming their leader. He was simply "sowing his wild oats." Does not his acceptance of employment from Sampson Brass and his kindly treatment of the poor little Marchioness clearly show the good in his nature struggling to come to the front ? That he should develop into a model husband later on seems the most natural thing in the world.

It is quite another matter with Sairey Gamp, who is selected by Mr. Borough as Dickens's best humorous character (see Page 143). There is nothing about her that is lovable. The humour of her sayings is undeniable, but they do not draw you towards her, as do the flashes of wit from Swiveller or Micawber. Her pretended love for all mankind is the most blatant hypocrisy and but thinly veils a cruel and callous nature ; but for her humour you would hate her.

As creations of Dickens's brain these three were equally great, but in the one case he is portraying a detestable type which he wishes to see stamped out, so lays the colours on very thickly and softens them down with no redeeming virtue. The other two are in a very different category. Dickens means you to like them from the very first, and you do so in spite of their peccadilloes. Their development and reformation follows almost as a matter of course.

W. B. Warren.

A RAILWAY NOTE

In *Our Mutual Friend*, Book 3, Chapter 9, at the end, I read :—

"The railway, at this point, knowingly shutting a green eye and opening a red one, they had to run for it." . . . "the train as it cleared the stations, all knowingly shutting up their green eyes and opening their red ones."

Is not this incorrect ? The red eye would *close*, and the green one *open* when a train was signalled. Or was the method of signalling different in 1865 ?

Lichfield. Montague Hardey.

FELLOWSHIP NOTES

CONTRIBUTED BY BRANCHES

Drawn by] [*Ruth Whittaker*

Branch Secretaries are kindly requested to send in interesting notes of the subject matter of only the more important of their meetings. Newspaper cuttings are not acceptable for these pages; neither is it possible to record lists of reciters, singers, entertainers, and casts of dramatic sketches.

Latest date for the Summer Number is May 8th.

A GREAT MONTREAL DICKENSIAN.

The Montreal Branch has lost one of its most popular and enthusiastic members through the death of Mr. Alfred T. Price at the age of 75. He was a Londoner by birth, and was head of the proof-room of the "Montreal Star." Some 15 years ago he was invited to take part in a programme arranged by the Montreal Branch, and this introduction to the Fellowship made him an eager and enthusiastic worker in its cause. He frequently recited and lectured on Dickens, and also served for a number of years on the Executive Committee. In these latter years also he made a hobby of collecting cuttings of all he read about Dickens, and from these he would prepare a Dickens page which the "Montreal Standard" published each Christmas. For many years Mr. Price has regularly represented Montreal at the Conference of North American Branches. No one was more cordially welcomed. Almost the first question delegates would ask on arriving was, "Is Mr. Price of Montreal here?" Like Mr. Pickwick, his great hero, he was a bachelor; and like Mr. Pickwick, too, he was a favourite with the ladies. In fact, the manner in which they crowded around him at the Conferences invariably prompted comparisons with Mr. Pickwick at Dingley Dell. He was a man whom one felt the novelist would have been delighted to know, and whom he would have felt inspired to describe. In particular, as indicated, he reminded one of Mr. Pickwick, though he did not wear spectacles; and like Mr. Pickwick, he lives in the memory of his many friends as an amiable, kind-hearted, jovial gentleman, who brightened every company he entered with his lively, kindly, gentle and imperturbable good humour.

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ST. PANCRAS.

The whist drive in aid of the Children's Hospital, Great Ormond Street, was a successful function on a small scale. A beautiful collection of toys and dolls for sick poor children of St. Pancras, given by members, were on view at the December meeting. *Martin Chuzzlewit* is proving a liberal education; the pathos, evil, humour, and descriptions of scenery are brought forward at each lecture. Mr. Edwards

proved himself a very capable chairman on January 17th, and at special request gave a short resumé of his American visit. The New Year Party was an unqualified success, and with Mr. Rust as M.C., the fun was fast and furious. The parade of Dickensian characters was very good, and the successful prize-winners were heartily cheered. The proceeds from the competition, though but a small sum, have been sent to the Endowment Fund of Dickens House. Edgware Branch proved itself a strong believer in the Federation of Branches idea by attending in a large number and St. Pancras will return the visit on February 7th.

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MARLEY'S GHOST WALKS AGAIN IN WINNIPEG.

The ghost of Marley walked again when Mr. H. G. Wade read *A Christmas Carol* at the December meeting to members and friends of the Dickens Fellowship before a crowded audience of five hundred in theatre "A" of the University. It was not a recital of the *Carol* as printed from cover to cover of the book, but the abbreviated form which Dickens himself used in his lecture tours. "Only Dickens," said Mr. Wade, "could have shaped the fine-spun strategy used by Marley's ghost to sell the idea of a merry Christmas to hard-boiled, cynical old Scrooge. Not only to Scrooge but to the whole of the English-speaking world did Dickens sell the Christmas idea, said the speaker, through the publication of the *Carol*, which has been read now for almost 90 years. Mr. Wade was in splendid form and gave the capacity house a great treat. He said that the *Carol* was an everlasting monument to Dickens. The Fellowship's "Tiny Tim Fund," for which a collection was made, is a direct outcome of the spirit of this Christmas story. The Winnipeg Boys' Choir presented a group of carols from many lands, their clear, young voices ringing out like silver bells. The President, Mr. G. W. Knipe, introduced the boys and expressed to them the appreciation of the Fellowship for their appearance.

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AUCKLAND.

The seventh yearly session just concluded has been most successful. Interest has been maintained throughout, with large attendances at the fortnightly meetings. The book taken for the year was *Great Expectations*, and a varied programme of sketches and lectures was presented. A Christmas entertainment was given to the patients of the Auckland Mental Hospital, with presents of handkerchiefs for the women and cigarettes for the men. A cot has been donated and endowed to the Princess Mary Ward of the Auckland Public Hospital. Attached to the cot is a plate with the words, "Presented by the Auckland Dickens Fellowship, February, 1932." At the final evening on November 24th there was a record attendance. Two sketches were rendered, "Mr. Pickwick's Valentine" and "Miss Squeers's Tea Party." There were also short speeches by the President, Vice-Presidents and Secretary, and a Dickens competition organised by the President. After the usual supper the gathering terminated with two of Dickens's favourite dances, the Polka and Sir Roger de Coverley.

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CHICAGO.

The Chicago Branch had its largest attendance of the season at its Christmas meeting. The Rev. J. W. G. Ward lectured on "The Humour and Pathos of Dickens," a talk which consisted of selections

from the writings of Dickens read and interpreted by Dr. Ward, during which many characters passed in review. Dr. Ward ended with a skeleton version of *The Christmas Carol*, without which no Christmas meeting would be complete. Following his talk the Dickens Fellowship Players under the direction of Miss Margaret Older gave a three-act playlet "Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig," in which many of the strange antics of that famous pair were humorously portrayed by Mrs. Charles C. Hubbard as Sairey and Miss Older as Betsey. A satisfactory collection was taken up for the Tiny Tim bed, and Dickens Christmas quotations were read by all members present. At the February meeting the members were requested to bring papers on their favourite character from *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and all the old favourites came in for a spirited defence. Miss Margaret Older's paper on Mrs. Harris was the hit of the afternoon and was greatly enjoyed. Miss Older said she did not agree with Betsey Prig when she said in reference to Mrs. Harris, "I don't believe there's no sich a person!" but that in fact she was quite certain that Mrs. Harris was a very real person! (Her paper will be printed in the next number of *The Dickensian*.—Editor.)

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TORONTO.

The first meeting for the season was held on October 13th. The President, Mr. J. Hunt Stanford, acted as chairman, and in his opening remarks called for the support of the members in our charitable work in view of the present need in this direction. Rev. Stuart Parker, D.D., spoke on *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and gave one of the very best addresses that this Branch has ever been privileged to listen to. Two scenes were produced by the Players, under the direction of Mrs. Thos. Pocklington, and were very well received. A meeting of the "Boz Club" was held on October 27th, when a very interesting address, "Charles Dickens as a Reporter," was given by Mr. J. W. McFadden, Past President of Toronto Branch. We regret to have to report the passing of Mr. E. M. Fleming, an Honorary Life Member, and for many years an active member of the Executive Council. For the many years Mr. Fleming served with us he was always ready to do anything he was called upon to do, and was interested in every branch of our activities, and his passing will leave a vacancy in our ranks that it will be very hard to fill.

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NEW YORK

At the first meeting of the season of the New York Branch there was an unusually large attendance. Mr. Reed, President, in his opening remarks stated that it was here we imbibed the humour and the spirit of Dickens. He read an article from the "New York Times" in which it was stated that more books relating to Dickens were sold than of any other author, and that he still remains the most popular of English novelists. Dr. Brice told us a little about the plot of *Martin Chuzzlewit* and gave a fine analysis of some of the characters. He spoke very sympathetically of poor old Mr. Chuffey, whom so many readers of Dickens fail to fully appreciate. Mr. Reed then introduced Mrs. Marie Mitchell to the audience as the little girl of four years who had sat upon Dickens's knees on the train on his second visit to America, and to whom he later presented a doll. Mrs. Mitchell is the daughter of Barney Williams, the well-known old-time comedian.

He read something from Dickens about her, and said this was a great stretching of hands across the years to Charles Dickens.

Another delightful address by Mrs. Georgie E. B. Wood was given to the New York Branch in January. Her subject was "Dickens's Critics, and my Criticism of Them." She stated that it was a very poor author indeed who could not stand criticism; that a few people have at times criticised Dickens adversely, yet to-day he looms up as one of the greatest writers of all times. She recited some foolish charges that had been brought against Dickens, that he could not create a gentleman, that his characters have been called grotesque and exaggerated, that he was untrue to life, and that his humour is rudimentary and crude, but she stated that if we are thrilled by the total effect, that is the only thing that matters; that Dickens was not only a great writer, but a great national institution; that Sitwell, in his recent book on Dickens, compares him with those three great writers, Dostoievsky, Flaubert and Marcel Proust. He had never been equalled in the art of conveying what a character looks like at first sight; that Sairey Gamp is as real as Queen Elizabeth and Samuel Pickwick as real as Julius Cæsar; that at some time or other he had been the particular friend of each one of us. Mrs. Wood's address, without the use of notes, was a pleasure to listen to, and its effect was greatly enhanced by a most natural and charming delivery and a pleasing personality. After each of our meetings we follow our leader to the rear of the gallery, where, surrounded on all sides by beautiful paintings from the brushes of the artist members of the National Arts Club, we quaff cooling draughts of a liquid supposed to be punch and partake of delicious cookies, and return to our homes entirely sober and most thoroughly pleased with our delightful evenings.

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THE BALHAM "SWARRY"

In November Miss Jolly organised for the Balham Branch a dramatic performance at the Hookwood Hall. Two plays were presented to a crowded audience, one from the book of the year, and the other from *Nicholas Nickleby*. The proceeds were for a Deaf and Dumb Children's Party which this branch gives every year with great success. Other pleasures included a Limehouse ramble to "The Jolly Fellowship Porters" and Mr. Roffey's lecture on the "Music of Dickens." But the most enjoyable was an invitation from the "select company of the Bath footmen" (otherwise the committee) to Mr. Weller and his friends (the branch members) to a "swarry" on January 13th. A large company sat down. Mr. Rust was the guest of the evening and proposed the toast of "The Immortal Memory." Other toasts and speeches followed, including one in which one of the "Bath Footmen" referred to Mr. Rust as the "Ghost of the evening," a slip of the tongue in a very brilliant speech which Mr. Rust's many friends will not let him forget in a hurry.

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EXCELLENT WORK BY EASTBOURNE

During Christmas week the Carol Party organised by this branch visited various hotels, boarding houses and private houses and collected £83 for the Tiny Tim Clinic. The entertainment arranged in January by Mrs. Ferguson and Miss Bussey in the Eastbourne College Hall, kindly lent for that purpose, resulted in the sum of £19 11s. 6d. being

handed to the Eastbourne and Hailsham Police Court Mission. No less than 130 Tiny Tims were given their annual tea and treat.

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IN DEFENCE OF MRS. NICKLEBY

At the January meeting of the Wellingborough Branch, Miss M. L. Pendered gave a paper, "In Defence of Mrs. Nickleby," in which she presented that much maligned lady as a gentle, lovable person possessing many virtues. Mrs. Nickleby, said Miss Pendered, must have been an attractive woman with good looks, a proof of which lies in the fact that she had two exceedingly handsome children, of whose father's good looks no mention is made. She was an exceptionally good mother, and had brought up her children carefully and with success, and they were both very devoted to her. They may have been made uncomfortable at times by her garrulity, but they made every allowance for her and treated her with unfailing courtesy and good humour. She had no sense of humour whatever, as is evidenced by the fact that she saw nothing at all ridiculous in the absurd protestations of the "gentleman next door." She possessed the vague and imaginative mind of a poet, and in another age, when education would have trained and disciplined her faculties, might have been a successful novelist. Discussion followed the paper, some members agreeing with Miss Pendered in her portrayal of Mrs. Nickleby, while others described the mother of Kate and Nicholas as a tiresome aggravating bore, whose company was rather to be tolerated than enjoyed. All agreed that the Mrs. Nicklebys are still with us and that Dickens in portraying her was true as he always was to that human nature which is the same in every age.

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DICKENS AND MODERN PROBLEMS

The Hackney and Stoke Newington Branch opened the New Year with a lecture by Mr. F. C. Watkins, J.P., on "Dickens and Present-day Problems." He described some of the terrible social evils of Dickens's day, how they had been removed, and the noble part taken by the great novelist in their removal. An immense change was taking place to-day, quite as great as that of the Industrial Revolution—the superseding of human labour by machinery. In the time of Dickens, men, women, and even children worked terribly long hours. Now they were suffering from a different evil—lack of work owing to new labour-saving methods. In the subsequent discussion it was suggested that if Dickens were living to-day he would write a novel on the terrible tragic comedy of destroying food while millions were on the verge of starvation, and would endeavour by his immense power of satire to sting Governments into taking drastic action to deal with unemployment and its kindred evils.

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DICKENS'S WOMEN

The November meeting of the Winnipeg Branch was addressed by Mr. J. Bruce Walker on the above subject, and women, in Dickens's time, he said, had occupied a secondary place in society, and the same might be said about the women in all the books of the great author.

The speaker looked upon Peggoty as an ideal servant girl; in some respects she was almost as good as any man character in the book, and she took a part in Copperfield's live from the day he was born until he settled comfortably in life.

Betsey Trotwood was representative of a business woman; her handling of the situation of young David, when he first fell into her hands, was masterly. Sarah Gamp was a type of nurse a century ago, ignorant, dirty and drunken. She was used by Dickens to point out a moral, and adorn a tale. His exposure of this character led eventually to the establishment of the nursing system which to-day is one of the most marvellous and competent organisations of our social life. Mrs. Micawber was a type of wife who was no housekeeper, had no knowledge of thrift, although well meaning and constantly in debt, but who eventually redeemed herself.

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The Whitstable Branch held its first winter meeting in October. Readings were given from *Martin Chuzzlewit*. In November we had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Edwards lecture on his tour in America, which was much enjoyed by all present. The annual Christmas Party at the Tankerton Hotel was a most successful affair, and the large number in Dickensian dress added to the gaiety of the proceedings. The branch was delighted to welcome several members from Rochester, including Mr. Cobb, the Hon. Secretary, and Mr. Hawes, the Charles Dickens of the Pageant. A return visit was paid to Rochester later in the month, when a delightful evening was spent at the Christmas Party of the branch there.

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At the Melbourne Branch in November last, Mr. C. R. Long, M.A., discussed *Great Expectations*. This book Mr. Long described as "direct, autobiographical, documentary, with an organic plot." He quoted Mr. Gissing's opinion of the story, "analytical and dramatic characterisation," and spoke deprecatingly of the altered ending. It contains a philosophy of life, and one great lesson to be learned from it is: "Don't be a snob." Miss Frances Fraser spoke on "Other Dickens Fellowships," having recently visited Sydney and Brisbane.* In the latter city she found a very flourishing branch, Dr. Cumbrae Stewart being the President. At the Christmas party, in the absence of the President, Mr. Callaway, the chair was taken by Miss E. A. Fraser, Vice-President. There was a lively programme of sketches, recitals and music, which gave much enjoyment to a full house. Mr. W. G. Southwell, Hon. Secretary, was an excellent stage manager, and he contributed a paper on "Christmas," which expressed high appreciation of the Christ-like spirit pervading all Dickens's writings on the subject. He exhorted members to buy Dickens's books and give them to their friends as Christmas presents, and suggested that an ideal Christmas box would be a year's subscription to the Fellowship to any friend who has not yet joined it.

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MANCHESTER

The annual dinner of the Manchester Branch was held at the Grosvenor Hotel on November 18th, the President, Mrs. H. E. Evans, occupying the chair and proposing "The Immortal Memory." In her speech she reminded the company that Dickens in his representation of a fine type of manhood had come for his characters to the industrial North, as in the Cheeryble Brothers. She recalled the change in the status of women since the days when Dickens wrote, and concluded

* We regret we hear so very seldom from either of these branches.—EDITOR.

by saying that we honour him not only as a great novelist, but for the good he did. The guest of the evening was the Rev. W. C. Hall, M.A., who proposed the toast of "The Dickens Fellowship." He genially traced the real foundation of the Fellowship to about the year 1837, when Tracy Tupman called Mr. Pickwick "a fellow" and Mr. Pickwick retorted "You're another." He thought it well that Mr. Pickwick should have been the first member and actually the founder of the human Dickens Fellowship. In his judgment Samuel Pickwick was one of the finest English gentlemen. The more he read *Pickwick* the less he regarded Samuel Pickwick as a buffoon, even in the earlier chapters; in the later he recognised the fineness of what he would call the "gentlehood" of the man. Dickens was more a creator of character than a caricaturist. The December meeting was devoted to "Short Papers and Impressions." Miss M. Coney read a paper "In Defence of some of Dickens's Heroines," in which she deplored the malignity and ridicule shown to Dickens's heroines. "Dickens and Blackpool—How would it appeal to him?" was the title of Miss Mill's imaginative paper inspired by the coming Conference at Blackpool, and she suggested how Dickens would have used the many human types he would have found there, and might have laid his scene in a beautiful seaside resort called "Happysands." Miss Farmer (Overseas Correspondent) read an interesting letter from the Chicago Branch. Mr. F. R. Dean gave an account of Dickens's association with "Bentley's Miscellany," of which five volumes have recently been presented to the branch library. Other contributions were made by Miss E. Biggs and Mr. G. M. Farmer. At the January meeting the members were entertained by a Dickensian programme of recitals provided by the Manchester Association of Elocutionists. Owing to the death of the Secretary, Mr. D. J. Parry (referred to elsewhere), the New Year Party was abandoned, but a meeting was held when appreciation of the work of the late Secretary was expressed by the President and other members of the branch.

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THE LATE MR. D. J. PARRY

We deeply regret to record that Mr. D. J. Parry, Honorary Secretary of the Manchester Branch since 1929, passed away in January last after only a few days' illness. He was also the Honorary Secretary of the North-Western Regional Group. He had a genius for organisation which, coupled with an excellent memory, tireless energy, and scrupulous attention to detail, made him an ideal secretary. His genial nature endeared him to all. Mr. Parry occupied the presidential chair of the Manchester Branch in 1925-6, and was for some years Honorary Treasurer of the branch. During the war years he took a prominent part in organising concerts in military hospitals under the auspices of the Fellowship. He was in regular attendance at the Annual Conferences, and by his passing the Fellowship has lost a devoted friend.

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CHELTENHAM

In December Mr. S. J. Rust delighted members of the Cheltenham Branch with an eloquent dissertation on "The Child's View of Dickens." Mr. Rust put everyone in a good humour, so that when the President appealed for the Christmas charities a record collection resulted. In addition to maintaining the Cot in the Children's Hospital, a present

was sent to every blind person in the district, and the children in the Poor Law Institution were well provided for. The Ladies' Evening in January took the form of an old-time party, of which Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig were the host and hostess. Right merrily did the members rise to the occasion and a very happy evening was spent. At the February meeting Mr. M. A. Porter, M.A., gave an interesting paper on "Dickens and Parents." He contrasted the various types of parents from Gradgrind to Tony Weller, and proved that there were very few satisfactory parents portrayed in Dickens's works. The Birthday celebrations were again a great success. 160 sat down to supper, and as is customary, representatives from Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cirencester graced the board, and, as usual, quarrelled over the merits of their particular home-town—but, of course, in a strictly Pickwickian manner. A cheery telegram from Headquarters made them remember that London also existed. Whist, Bridge and Dancing completed a jolly evening.

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All the meetings of the Plymouth Branch as recorded in the Diary have been held, and all were very successful; special congratulations must be given to the evening arranged by the junior Dickensians. The Rev. Alexander Sharpe, in proposing the Immortal Memory at the Birthday Dinner, said that he came to look upon Dickens as almost a personal friend. One great point about his writings was that they were pure; there was not one immodest remark in the whole of the works of Dickens. He wished he could say the same about modern fiction. Lt.-Com. J. Hoskin, the president of the branch, was in the chair, and all the arrangements were most successfully carried out by Mrs. Annear.

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The outstanding event of the season with the Victoria (B.C.) Branch was the "At Home," given by Mr. and Mrs. Boffin (Mrs. Semple and Mr. Llewellyn), when the Cridge Memorial Hall was crowded with characters from the pages of Dickens. Before the proceedings opened, the Hon. Sec., Mr. Arthur Arnup, explained Mrs. Boffin's penchant for Society, which had led to the idea of the gathering.

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LATE REPORTS

The following reports from Branches arrived in London several days after the advertised date for receiving them. The Editor regrets he has had to condense them considerably in consequence. The "making-up" of a number of this magazine is no easy task; the time-table of the printers has to be strictly adhered to. The insertion of these late reports has necessitated a rearrangement of several articles in this number, and an unnecessary expenditure of several hours on the part of the Editor. *In future no report received after the advertised date will be inserted.* Will Branch Secretaries kindly note.

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At the December meeting of the Toronto Branch the speaker of the evening was Rev. F. N. Stapleford. The Dramatic feature, in charge of Mr. W. Purvis Wood, produced five scenes from *A Christmas Carol*. The music was provided by St. Aidan's Anglican Church Choir. The usual Christmas collection in aid of the Christmas Tree for Needy Children was taken up. This Christmas Tree was in full glory on December 28th, when Santa Claus, in the person of Mr. Frank W. Hunt

presented gifts of warm clothing, toys, games, and candy to 130 children. The entertainment concluded with games, a Punch and Judy Show, and refreshments. Cars were provided by the members for transportation of the children to and from the Hall. At the January meeting Magistrate J. Edmund Jones was the chief speaker. A playlet entitled "The Maypole Inn," adapted and produced under the direction of Mr. Raymond Card, comprised the dramatic portion of the programme, while music was provided by an instrumental trio. The Annual Play, which this year is *A Tale of Two Cities*, will be produced from February 21st to 25th (inclusive) at The Margaret Eaton Theatre.

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Rochester held the Birthday Party on January 25th, when over two hundred were present. Seventy of the members were in Dickensian costume, headed by the presidents, Mr. and Mrs. Prall, as Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig. A party of fourteen motored over from the Whitstable Branch, an action greatly appreciated by the Rochester members. Music, dancing, games, and refreshment together combined to make up a very jolly and memorable evening.

(*Continued on page* 166)

DICKENSIANA OF THE QUARTER

BOOKS.

The Romance of Lincoln's Inn Fields, by E. Beresford Chancellor (illustrated). 12s. 6d. The Richards Press, Ltd.

The Face of London, by Harold P. Clunn. (Illustrated). 7s. 6d. Simpkin, Marshall, Ltd.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

"Charles Dickens's Hymn," by A. H. Reed. *The Outlooker* (Dunedin), 25 July.

"*A Christmas Carol* in Miniature." *Shields Daily News*, 12 December.

"The Irresistible Three—Dinner, Dickens and Christmas." *The Queen*, 21 December.

"Scrooges of To-day." *John Bull*, 24 December.

"The Merry Ghosts of Dickens," by his son. *Sunday Dispatch*, 25 December.

"A Christmas Editorial by Dickens." *Sunday Chronicle*, 25 December.

"What Christmas is as we grow older" (reprint). *Essex Chronicle*, 23 December.

"In Praise of Dickens," by Professor Harold Laski. *Daily Herald*, 24 December.

"Mr. Scrooge—1932." *Daily Worker*, 27 December.

"Dickens's Christmas Stories and how he wrote them," by J. B. Brookes. *Wigan Examiner*, and other papers, 24 December.

"Dickens Folk in Brief," by F. J. H. *Sussex County Herald*, 24 December.

"The Christmas Dickens Loved." *Portsmouth Evening News*, 24 December.

"Christmas Magic; a Medley by Dickens." *New York Times*. 25 December.

"Dingley Dell." *John O' London's Weekly*, 3 December.

"A Merry Christmas with Charles Dickens," by F. G. Taylor, *Weston-super-Mare Gazette*, 17 December.

"If Dickens wrote his *Carol* now," by Sir Philip Gibbs. *Pictorial Weekly*, 17 December.

"Christmas in Dickens's Home," by Harold Armitage. *Letchworth Citizen*, 16 December.

"*A Christmas Carol* in Miniature." *Burton Observer*, 15 December.

"Potted Biographies, No. 72, Dickens," by W. W. Patterson. *Wembley News*, 16 December.

"Christmas without Dickens," by Rowland Grey. *Great Thoughts*, December.

"Links with Dickens," by Ivor Brown. *Manchester Guardian*, 3 December.

"The Man who Half-made Christmas," by H. E. Bates. *New Clarion*, 3 December.

"*A Christmas Carol*," by the Young People's Editor. *Manchester City News*, 10 December.

"Spend Christmas With Dickens," by J. S. Collis. *Irish Independent*, 24 December.

"Great English Writers. No. 17, Dickens." *Schoolmistress*, 5 January.

"English Food. The Foreigner and Dickens." *Manchester Guardian*, 6 January.

"House Where Dickens Slept. *Evening World* (Bristol), 11 January.

"How Eatanswill was won." *Irish Press*, 10 January.

"Dickens's 'Gashford,'" *The Scotsman*, 13 January.

BRANCH REPORTS *continued from page* 165

The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, were the guests at the Birthday Dinner at Portsmouth. Mr. Bertram Sutton, chairman of the Branch, occupied the chair. In proposing the toast of the Immortal Memory, the Lord Mayor referred to the excellent work being done by the Fellowship in the city of Dickens's birth, especially that part of it which had its interest in the hospitals and the Tiny Tims. It was by doing such good work that the name of Dickens was kept immortal. The Dinner was followed by dancing and games, and proved to be the most successful social function arranged by the branch for some time past.

* * * * *

Following an appeal made at the Annual Dinner of the Bromley Branch, about 170 toys were given at Christmas to children of the unemployed. Gifts of coal also were made. Mr. Skene, of the local Labour Exchange and a member of the branch, supervised the distribution and saw to it that the gifts went to those not reached by other organisations.

* * * * *

The costume dance and party organised by the Rugby Branch was an unqualified success, and has given the branch an excellent advertisement. The Mayor and Mayoress were present, and the stately quadrille, the rollicking polka, and the ever-famous Sir Roger quite ousted the fox-trots and bunny-hugs. Mrs. E. D. Miller, O.B.E., assisted by Miss Minards, the Assistant Secretary from London, were the judges in the costume parade. For this innovation, which it is hoped to repeat next year, our thanks are due to the unflagging zeal of our President, Mrs. Eardley Morriss, the chairman, Mr. Frank Locking, the treasurer, Mr. A. White, and the hon. secretary, Mr. F. J. Hudson.

DIARY OF DICKENS FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS

All notices received to the time of going to press have been inserted.

BALHAM.
Mar. 10—Lantern Lecture, "Dickens and London" by Mr. W. Kent.
April 21—Members' Essays.
May 12—Annual Meeting and Social Evening.

BATH.
Mar. 6—Reading Circle.
13—Whist Drive.
20—Lecture, "Societies according to Dickens," by Mr. T. Sturge Cotterell.
April 3—Reading Circle.
24—Lecture, "Going to the Dogs with Dickens," by Miss F. Tylee.
May 1—Reading Circle.
8—Annual Meeting.

BLACKBURN.
Mar. 2—Lecture, "Some adventures of Mr. Jingle," by Mrs. Greenwood.
17—Visit to Manchester Branch.
23—Lecture, "England from a Dickens Coach," by Rev. A. Boddington, M.A.
April 6—Papers by Lady Members.

BLACKPOOL.
Mar. 2—Dramatic Evening.
6—Visit to Blackpool Literary and Scientific Society.
23—Writers of Dickens's time. Daudet, by Mr. Barnfather. Thackeray, by Miss Alys Myers.
April 6—Papers on "Dickens's England."
29—Annual Meeting.

BRIDLINGTON.
Mar. 21—Play-Readings by the Dramatic Society.
April 18—Social and Dance.

BRIGHTON.
Mar. 2—Competition for the "Laura Withy Memorial Cup."
April 6—Dramatic Recital, arranged by Mr. Henry Wilson.

BROMLEY.
Mar. 15—Dramatic Readings from *Dombey and Son*.
April 5—Lecture, "Dickens's Early Days," by Mr. A. W. Edwards.

CHELTENHAM.
Mar. 3—Visit of the President, Mr. H. A. Vachell.
April 7—Annual Meeting.

CIRENCESTER.
Mar. 6—Lecture, "Dickens and the Drama," by Mr. H. O. Barnett.
April 3—Annual Meeting.

EASTBOURNE.
Mar. 7—Dramatic Readings by the Study Circle.
14, 28—Study Circle.

EDGWARE.
Mar. 14—Lecture by Mrs. Cane, "Victorian Nursing."
21—Dramatic Section.
April 11—Members' Evening.
May 9—Annual Meeting.

EDMONTON.
Mar. 7—Guest Social.
21—Debate.
April 4—Study Group.
18—The Dickens Players.
May 1—Annual Meeting and Social.

EDINBURGH.
Mar. 9—Lecture, "Dickens's Works in Monthly Parts," by Mr. C. E. S. Chambers.
24—An evening of Progressive Whist and Bridge.
April 6—Annual Meeting, followed by Sketches arranged by the Misses M. and D. Brown.

HACKNEY AND STOKE NEWINGTON.
Mar. 6—"The Letters and Speeches of Dickens," by Mr. J. P. Rapsey.
April 12—"Sherlock Holmes takes up the Drood Case," by Mr. W. Saunders, B.Sc.

HULL.
Mar. 3—Lecture, "Dickens and the Moderns," by Mr. C. H. Burden, B.A., B.Sc.
17—Debate, "Does Dickens maintain his Appeal?" Misses Byers and Whiting *v.* Misses Davidson and Wood.
31—A Dickensian Pot-Pourri, arranged by Mrs. Lawson and Mrs. Pashley.
April 21—Annual Meeting.

HATFIELD.
Mar. 14—Annual Meeting.

LIVERPOOL.
Mar. 8—Lecture by Mr. Tudor Rhys.
22—Members' Evening, "How the Dickens Fellowship should be run."

LONDON.
Mar. 17—Lecture, "Dickens's Oldest Friend, Thomas Beard," by Mr. Walter Dexter. Chairman, Mr. Bernard Darwin.
April 1—Informal Dinner at Palace Hotel.
26—Annual Meeting. Dramatic performance under direction of Miss F. Jolly.

MANCHESTER.
Mar. 3—Members' Papers or Impressions on *Martin Chuzzlewit.*
17—Café Chantant; visit of the Regional Group.
April 7—Annual Meeting.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.
Mar. 10—Scenes from *A Tale of Two Cities,* by Mr. and Miss Bell.
24—*Our Mutual Friend,* by the Dickens Players.
April 7—Social.
21—Annual Meeting.

MONTREAL.
Mar. 28—Lecture, "Psychology and Dickens," by Dean Philip Carrington.
April 25—Members' Evening, "Touring with Dickens."

NOTTINGHAM.
Mar. 16, 28—Readings from *Martin Chuzzlewit.*
Mar. 25—Supper and Dance.
April 12—Annual Meeting.

PLYMOUTH.
Mar. 7—Musical and Literary Evening, arranged by Mrs. W. W. Vinson.
16—Whist Drive.
21—"A Dickensian Pot-Pourri," arranged by Mrs. C. C. Ball.
28—Annual Meeting.

REDDITCH.
Mar. 1—Sketches, by the Dramatic Section.
April 5—Dickens Song-Recital, by Mrs. Eardly Morris, of Rugby Branch.
May 3—General Meeting.

ST. PANCRAS.
Mar. 7—Debate with the Edgware Branch, "Is *Martin Chuzzlewit* Dickens's greatest Book?"

SHEFFIELD.
Mar. 10—Lecture-Recital by Rev. W. T. Nicholson.
30—Pickwick Supper.
April 7—Annual Meeting and Social.

SOUTHAMPTON.
Mar. 9—Resumé of Chapters 37 to end of *Martin Chuzzlewit,* arranged by Mr. A. J. Cheverton.
April 6—Annual Meeting.

SOUTHEND.
Mar. 1—Dramatic Performance.
6—Lantern Lecture, by Mr. Frank S. Johnson.
25—Dance.
April 15—Annual Meeting and Dance.

TORONTO.
Mar. 9—Play, *The Lamplighter,* arranged by Mr. R. Priestman. Address by Mr. J. W. McFadden.
April 13—Scenes from *Master Humphrey's Clock,* arranged by Mr. R. Whitfield Aston. Address by Prof. W. W. Wallace.

WELLINGBOROUGH.
Mar. 4—Lecture, "The Optimism of Dickens," by Rev. J. Gleave.
18—Debate, "Was Dickens fair to America in *Martin Chuzzlewit*?" Miss E. Abbott and Miss F. Netlingham.
April 1—Social Evening.

WHITSTABLE.
Mar. 31—Lecture.
April 28—Sketches by Members.
May 26—London Ramble.

WINNIPEG.
Mar. 9—Lecture on *The Old Curiosity Shop,* by Professor Frank Allen.
April 13—Ladies' Night.

WOODVILLE.
Mar. 10—Play Reading.
22—Dramatic Entertainment.

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FRIDAY June 16th .. Reception at the Imperial Hydro Hotel at 8 p.m. by the President and members of the Blackpool Branch. Light music, etc. Refreshments.

SATURDAY June 17th .. Morning: the Business Meeting. Photograph in Imperial Hydro grounds. Afternoon: Car ride to the Pleasure Beach. Afternoon tea as guests of the Blackpool Branch at the Casino, Pleasure Beach. Evening: Banquet at the Imperial Hydro Hotel, followed by a dance until midnight. Chairman, Ald. John Potter, J.P., M.P. Tickets 10/6 each.

SUNDAY June 18th .. Morning: Parish Church. Afternoon: Motor Coach Drive round the Fylde. This delightful trip covers twenty miles of the coastline, and the same distance of the rural Fylde. The cost, 2/6 per head. Evening: Free.

MONDAY June 19th .. MOTOR TOUR TO THE LAKE DISTRICT. Leave Blackpool about 8-30 to 9 a.m. Morecambe Bay, Kendal, Windermere, Ambleside, Grasmere, to Keswick (Lunch), Thirlmere, Bowness, Lyth Valley, Levens Bridge, Milnthorpe, to Lancaster. At Lancaster we shall inspect the King's Head, and in the Museum a display of matters of interest to Dickensians is being arranged by Mr. Bland, the Borough Librarian. In the Banqueting Hall an official welcome will be extended by the Lady Mayoress, Councillor Annie E. Helme, after which Tea will then be served. The cost of the day, including Lunch and Tea, will be 12/6 per head.

EVENING .. At 8 p.m. the Mayor and Corporation of Blackpool will entertain the Delegates in the Baronial and Spanish Halls of the Winter Gardens to a Dance. A Running Buffet will be provided free. Dickensian Character Costume as far as possible, otherwise Evening Dress. The beauties of these Halls will greatly enhance the glory of the evening. At 12 midnight, our programme will be completed.

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